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General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/433 and A/72/433/Corr.1)*]

72/152. Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Organization of African Unity Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa of 1969[1] and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,[2]

Reaffirming that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees,[3] together with the 1967 Protocol thereto,[4] as complemented by the Organization of African Unity Convention of 1969, remains the foundation of the international refugee protection regime in Africa,

Welcoming the entry into force on 6 December 2012 and the ongoing process of ratification of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, which mark a significant step towards strengthening the national and regional normative frameworks for the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons,

Recognizing the particular vulnerability of women and children, as well as older persons and persons with disabilities, among refugees and displaced persons, including exposure to discrimination and sexual and physical abuse, violence and exploitation and the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict in violation of applicable international law, and in this regard acknowledging the importance of preventing, responding to and addressing sexual and gender-based violence as well as violations and abuses committed against refugee, returnee and displaced children,

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1001, No. 14691.
[2] Ibid., vol. 1520, No. 26363.
[3] Ibid., vol. 189, No. 2545.
[4] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

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Gravely concerned about the continued rising number of refugees and displaced persons in various parts of the continent,

Acknowledging the efforts of Member States, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other stakeholders in improving the situation of refugees and their host communities,

Expressing grave concern about funding gaps in the budgets of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme, which are among the most underfunded, in responding to various refugee situations in different parts of Africa, which are a major factor leading to the deterioration in living conditions in many refugee camps in Africa,

Recognizing that refugees, internally displaced persons and, in particular, women and children are at an increased risk of exposure to HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases,

Recalling the high-level segment on the theme "Enhancing international cooperation, solidarity, local capacities and humanitarian action for refugees in Africa" of the sixty-fifth session of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, held in Geneva from 29 September to 3 October 2014, and the statement adopted on 30 September 2014 by States members of the Executive Committee,[5] and expressing deep concern that this particular event has not mobilized the necessary support for refugees and their hosting countries and communities,

Welcoming the special summit on protection and durable solutions for Somali refugees and reintegration of returnees in Somalia, held in Nairobi on 25 March 2017, at which the Nairobi Declaration on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and the Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia was adopted, the nomination of the Special Envoy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the Somali refugee situation, the London Conference, held on 11 May 2017, and the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees, held on 22 and 23 June 2017, and encouraging those who participated to implement the commitments made therein,

Welcoming also the outcome of the Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region, held on 24 February 2017, calling upon donors and development partners to fulfil commitments and pledges with the aim of mitigating the humanitarian disasters as well as bringing about durable solutions that will increase the resilience of the people and restore livelihoods in the area, and welcoming the Senior Officials Meeting of the Oslo Consultative Group on Prevention and Stabilization in the Lake Chad Region, held in Berlin on 6 September 2017, at which country representatives, donors and development partners and regional organizations addressed the structural causes of the crisis, community stabilization, restoration of basic services, local governance systems and the prevention of violence in Nigeria and the region,

Recalling the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, adopted by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region in 2006, and its instruments, in particular two of the protocols to the Pact that are relevant to the protection of displaced persons, namely, the Protocol on the Protection of and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons and the Protocol on the Property Rights of Returning Persons,

Acknowledging with appreciation the generosity, hospitality and spirit of solidarity of African States that, despite their limited resources, continue to host a

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 12A* (A/69/12/Add.1), annex I.

large number of refugees, owing to humanitarian crises and protracted refugee situations, in this regard expressing particular appreciation for the commitment and efforts of neighbouring countries in the recent humanitarian crises on the continent, welcoming efforts by African States that endeavour to facilitate the voluntary repatriation, local integration, resettlement and rehabilitation of refugees and to promote conditions conducive to the voluntary return and sustainable reintegration of refugees in their country of origin, and also acknowledging with appreciation the coordination of humanitarian assistance by the United Nations as well as the continuing efforts of donors, the United Nations system, including the Office of the High Commissioner, regional organizations, international agencies, non-governmental organizations and other partners, with regard to durable solutions for addressing the plight of refugees during emergencies, and recalling that those solutions include voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement in a third country, while reaffirming that voluntary repatriation, supported, as necessary, by rehabilitation and development assistance to facilitate sustainable reintegration, remains the preferred solution,

Recognizing that host States have the primary responsibility for the protection of and assistance to refugees on their territory and need to redouble efforts to develop and implement comprehensive durable solution strategies, in appropriate cooperation with the international community, and burden- and responsibility-sharing, and recognizing also the efforts of all States in this regard,

Emphasizing that States have the primary responsibility to provide protection and assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction, as well as to address the root causes of the displacement problem, in appropriate cooperation with the international community,

Recognizing the need to expand resettlement opportunities,

Recognizing also the need to encourage increased efforts towards voluntary return and local integration,

Welcoming the ongoing implementation of pledges made by States at the intergovernmental ministerial event held in 2011 to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness,[6]

Reaffirming its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[7] supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenges of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Taking note of the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016, while recognizing that it did not have an intergovernmentally agreed outcome, and welcoming the commitment of the African Heads of State and Government, adopted by the African Union, on the theme "One Africa, One Voice, One Message at the World Humanitarian Summit",

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General[8] and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;[9]

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[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 989, No. 14458.

[7] Resolution 70/1.

[8] A/72/354.

[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 12* (A/72/12).

2. *Calls upon* African States that have not yet signed or ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa to consider doing so as early as possible in order to ensure its wider implementation;

3. *Notes* the need for African States to resolutely address the root causes of all forms of forced displacement in Africa and to foster peace, stability and prosperity throughout the African continent so as to forestall flows of refugees;

4. *Notes with great concern* that, despite all the efforts made so far by the United Nations, the African Union and others, the situation of refugees and displaced persons in Africa remains precarious and the number of refugees and internally displaced persons has dramatically increased, and calls upon States and other parties to armed conflict to observe scrupulously the letter and spirit of international humanitarian law, bearing in mind that armed conflict is one of the principal causes of forced displacement in Africa;

5. *Welcomes* decisions EX.CL/Dec.854 (XXVI), EX.CL/Dec.877 (XXVII) and EX.CL/899 (XXVIII) adopted by the Executive Council of the African Union at its twenty-sixth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 23 to 27 January 2015, its twenty-seventh ordinary session, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 7 to 12 June 2015, and its twenty-eighth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 23 to 28 January 2016, on the humanitarian situation in Africa, insofar as they relate to persons of concern to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

6. *Expresses its appreciation* for the leadership shown by the Office of the High Commissioner, and commends the Office for its ongoing efforts, with the support of the international community, to assist African States hosting large numbers of refugees, including by providing support to vulnerable local host communities, and to respond to the protection and assistance needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa;

7. *Notes with appreciation* the initiatives taken by the African Union, the Subcommittee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons of its Permanent Representatives Committee and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, in particular the role of its Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, to ensure the protection of and assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa;

8. *Underlines* the need to provide an efficient response to internally displaced persons, and recognizes in this regard the importance of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa;

9. *Acknowledges* the important contribution of age, gender and diversity mainstreaming in identifying, through the full participation of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities, the protection risks faced by the different members of the refugee communities, in particular the non-discriminatory treatment and protection of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

10. *Affirms* that children, because of their age, social status and physical and mental development, are often more vulnerable than adults in situations of forced displacement, recognizes that forced displacement, return to post-conflict situations, integration into new societies, protracted situations of displacement and statelessness can increase child protection risks, taking into account the particular vulnerability of displaced children to forcible exposure to the risks of physical and psychological injury, exploitation and death in connection with armed conflict, as well as the

recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict in violation of applicable international law, and acknowledges that wider environmental factors and individual risk factors, particularly when combined, may generate different protection needs;

11. *Recognizes* that no solution to forced displacement can be durable unless it is sustainable, and therefore encourages the Office of the High Commissioner to support the sustainability of durable solutions, and recalls that those solutions include voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement in a third country, while reaffirming that voluntary repatriation, supported, as necessary, by rehabilitation and development assistance to facilitate sustainable reintegration, remains the preferred solution;

12. *Reaffirms* the conclusion on civil registration adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at its sixty-fourth session, held in Geneva from 30 September to 4 October 2013,[10] and recognizes the importance of early registration and effective registration systems and censuses as a tool of protection and as a means to the quantification and assessment of needs for the provision and distribution of humanitarian assistance and to implement appropriate durable solutions;

13. *Also reaffirms* the conclusion on registration of refugees and asylum seekers adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fifty-second session,[11] notes the many forms of harassment faced by refugees and asylum seekers who remain without any form of documentation attesting to their status, recalls the responsibility of States to register refugees on their territories and, as appropriate, the responsibility of the Office of the High Commissioner or mandated international bodies to do so, reiterates in this context the central role that early and effective registration and documentation can play, guided by protection considerations, in enhancing protection and supporting efforts to find durable solutions, and calls upon the Office, as appropriate, to help States to conduct this procedure should they be unable to register refugees on their territory;

14. *Welcomes* the adoption of the conclusion on machine-readable travel documents for refugees and stateless persons by the Executive Committee at its sixty-eighth session;[12]

15. *Calls upon* the international community, including States and the Office of the High Commissioner and other relevant United Nations organizations, within their respective mandates, to take concrete action to meet the protection and assistance needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons and to contribute generously to projects and programmes aimed at alleviating their plight, facilitating durable solutions and supporting vulnerable local host communities;

16. *Acknowledges* the efforts made by the African countries applying the comprehensive refugee response framework, and underscores the importance for the international community of ensuring appropriate and timely support;

17. *Reaffirms* the importance of timely and adequate assistance and protection for refugees, returnees and displaced persons, also reaffirms that assistance and protection are mutually reinforcing and that inadequate material assistance and food shortages undermine protection, notes the importance of a rights- and community-based approach in engaging constructively with individual refugees, returnees and displaced persons and their communities so as to achieve fair and equitable access to food and other forms of material assistance, and expresses concern with regard to

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[10] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 12A* (A/68/12/Add.1), chap. III, sect. A.

[11] Ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 12A* (A/56/12/Add.1), chap. III, sect. B.

[12] Ibid., *Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 12A* (A/72/12/Add.1), chap. III, sect. A.

situations in which minimum standards of assistance are not met, including those in which adequate needs assessments have yet to be undertaken;

18. *Also reaffirms* that respect by States for their protection responsibilities towards refugees is strengthened by international solidarity involving all members of the international community and that the refugee protection regime is enhanced through committed international cooperation in a spirit of solidarity and burden- and responsibility-sharing among all States;

19. *Further reaffirms* that host States have the primary responsibility to ensure the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum, calls upon States, in cooperation with international organizations, within their mandates, to take all measures necessary to ensure respect for the principles of refugee protection and, in particular, to ensure that the civilian and humanitarian nature of refugee camps is not compromised by the presence or the activities of armed elements or used for purposes that are incompatible with their civilian character, and encourages the High Commissioner to continue efforts, in consultation with States and other relevant actors, to ensure the civilian and humanitarian character of camps;

20. *Condemns* all acts that pose a threat to the personal security and well-being of refugees and asylum seekers, such as refoulement, unlawful expulsion and physical attacks, calls upon States of refuge, in cooperation with international organizations, where appropriate, to take all measures necessary to ensure respect for the principles of refugee protection, including the humane treatment of asylum seekers, notes with interest that the High Commissioner has continued to take steps to encourage the development of measures to better ensure the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum, and encourages the High Commissioner to continue those efforts, in consultation with States and other relevant actors;

21. *Deplores* the continuing violence and insecurity, which constitute an ongoing threat to the safety and security of staff members of the Office of the High Commissioner and other humanitarian organizations and an obstacle to the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Office and the ability of its implementing partners and other humanitarian personnel to discharge their respective humanitarian functions, urges States, parties to conflict and all other relevant actors to take all measures necessary to protect activities related to humanitarian assistance, prevent attacks on and kidnapping of national and international humanitarian workers and ensure the safety and security of the personnel and property of the Office and that of all humanitarian organizations discharging functions mandated by the Office, and calls upon States to investigate fully any crime committed against humanitarian personnel and bring to justice the persons responsible for such crimes;

22. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner, the African Union, subregional organizations and all African States, in conjunction with agencies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the international community, to strengthen and revitalize existing partnerships and forge new ones in support of the protection system for refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons, and encourages African States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying and enforcing the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel;[13]

23. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner, the international community, donors and other entities concerned to continue and, where appropriate, to intensify their support to African Governments through appropriate capacity-building activities, including training of relevant officers, disseminating information about refugee instruments and principles, providing financial, technical, legal and

[13] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2051, No. 35457.

advisory services to accelerate the enactment or amendment and implementation of legislation relating to refugees, strengthening emergency response and enhancing capacities for the coordination of humanitarian activities, in particular to those Governments that have received large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers;

24. *Reaffirms* the right of return, in accordance with international law, and the principle of voluntary repatriation, appeals to countries of origin and countries of asylum to create conditions that are conducive to voluntary repatriation, and recognizes that, while voluntary repatriation remains the pre-eminent solution, local integration and third-country resettlement, where appropriate and feasible, are also viable options for dealing with the situation of African refugees who, owing to prevailing circumstances in their respective countries of origin, are unable to return home;

25. *Also reaffirms* that voluntary repatriation should not necessarily be conditioned on the accomplishment of political solutions in the country of origin in order not to impede the exercise of the refugees' right to return, recognizes that the voluntary repatriation and reintegration process is normally guided by the conditions in the country of origin, in particular that voluntary repatriation can be accomplished in conditions of safety and dignity, and urges the High Commissioner to promote sustainable return through the development of durable and lasting solutions, particularly in protracted refugee situations;

26. *Calls upon* the international donor community to provide financial and material assistance that allows for the implementation of community-based development programmes that benefit both refugees and host communities, as appropriate, in agreement with host countries and consistent with humanitarian objectives;

27. *Appeals* to the international community to respond positively, in the spirit of solidarity and burden- and responsibility-sharing, to the third-country resettlement needs of African refugees, notes in this regard the importance of using resettlement strategically, as part of situation-specific comprehensive responses to refugee situations, and to this end encourages States, the Office of the High Commissioner and other relevant partners to make full use of the Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement, where appropriate and feasible;

28. *Expresses serious concern* about the expected and continued reduction of the budget allocated to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa in 2018 and 2019 while there has been no substantial decrease in the number of refugees;

29. *Calls upon* the international donor community to provide material and financial assistance for the implementation of programmes intended for the rehabilitation of the environment and infrastructure affected by refugees in countries of asylum as well as internally displaced persons, where appropriate;

30. *Urges* the international community, in the spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing, to continue to fund generously the refugee programmes of the Office of the High Commissioner and other relevant humanitarian organizations and, taking into account the substantially increased needs of programmes in Africa, inter alia, as a result of repatriation possibilities, to ensure that Africa receives a fair and equitable share of the resources designated for refugees;

31. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner and interested States to identify protracted refugee situations which might lend themselves to resolution through the development of specific, multilateral, comprehensive and practical approaches to resolving such refugee situations, including the improvement of international burden- and responsibility-sharing and the realization of durable

solutions, within a multilateral context, and recalls that those solutions include voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement in a third country, while reaffirming that voluntary repatriation, supported, as necessary, by rehabilitation and development assistance to facilitate sustainable reintegration, remains the preferred solution;

32. *Expresses grave concern* about the plight of internally displaced persons in Africa, welcomes the efforts of African States in strengthening the regional mechanisms for the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, calls upon States to take concrete action to pre-empt internal displacement and to meet the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons, recalls in that regard the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[14] notes the current activities of the Office of the High Commissioner related to the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, including in the context of inter-agency arrangements in this field, emphasizes that such activities should be consistent with relevant General Assembly resolutions and should not undermine the refugee mandate of the Office and the institution of asylum, and encourages the High Commissioner to continue his dialogue with States on the role of his Office in this regard;

33. *Encourages* African States, together with development and humanitarian actors, to work closely on multi-year strategies for refugees and internally displaced persons, factoring in the subregional dimension of many forced displacement crises;

34. *Invites* the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the human rights of internally displaced persons to continue the ongoing dialogue with Member States and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, in accordance with the Council's mandate, and to include information thereon in all reports to the Council and the General Assembly;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, taking fully into account, inter alia, the situation of their host communities, refugee camps and the efforts expended by countries of asylum and those aimed at bridging funding gaps, under the item entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions".

73rd plenary meeting
19 December 2017

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[14] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

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[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/434)*]

72/153. Report of the Human Rights Council

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 60/251 of 15 March 2006, by which it established the Human Rights Council, and 65/281 of 17 June 2011 on the review of the Council,

Recalling also its resolutions 62/219 of 22 December 2007, 63/160 of 18 December 2008, 64/143 of 18 December 2009, 65/195 of 21 December 2010, 66/136 of 19 December 2011, 67/151 of 20 December 2012, 68/144 of 18 December 2013, 69/155 of 18 December 2014, 70/136 of 17 December 2015 and 71/174 of 19 December 2016,

Having considered the recommendations contained in the report of the Human Rights Council,[1,2]

Takes note of the report of the Human Rights Council,[1] including the addendum thereto,[2] and its recommendations.

73rd plenary meeting
19 December 2017

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/72/53).
[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 53A* (A/72/53/Add.1).

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/435)*]

72/154. The girl child

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/138 of 17 December 2015 and all relevant resolutions on the girl child, and recalling its resolution 66/170 of 19 December 2011 on the International Day of the Girl Child and the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular those relevant to the girl child,

Recalling all human rights and other instruments relevant to the rights of the child, in particular the girl child, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[1] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[2] the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[3] the Optional Protocols thereto[4] and the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages,[5]

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[6] and reaffirming also other internationally agreed development goals and commitments relevant to the girl child,

Noting the adoption of the Southern African Development Community Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage,

Reaffirming all relevant outcomes of major United Nations summits and conferences relevant to the girl child, including the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled "A world fit for

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[2] Ibid., vol. 1249, No. 20378.
[3] Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.
[4] Ibid., vols. 2171 and 2173, No. 27531, and resolution 66/138, annex; United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2131, No. 20378, and ibid., vol. 2518, No. 44910.
[5] Ibid., vol. 521, No. 7525.
[6] Resolution 69/313, annex.

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children",[7] the Beijing Declaration[8] and Platform for Action,[9] the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[10] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[11] the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,[12] the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, entitled "Global Crisis – Global Action",[13] and the political declarations on HIV and AIDS adopted by the high-level meetings of the General Assembly held in 2006,[14] 2011[15] and 2016,[16] and reiterating that their full and effective implementation is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing that chronic poverty remains one of the biggest obstacles to meeting the needs and promoting and protecting the rights of the child, including the girl child, and that girls living in poverty are more likely to be married as children or to work to ease family hardships, often ending education and suffering other harmful consequences, further limiting their opportunities and leaving them entrenched in poverty, and recognizing also that the eradication of poverty must remain a high priority for the international community,

Recognizing also that urgent national and international action is required to eliminate poverty, including extreme poverty, and noting that the impacts of global financial and economic crises, volatile energy and food prices and continuing food insecurity as a result of various factors are felt directly by households,

Recognizing further that social protection, education, adequate health care, nutrition, full access to clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, skills development and combating discrimination and violence against girls, among other things, are all necessary for the empowerment of the girl child, and recalling the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective across the United Nations system in relation to the girl child,

Underscoring that women and girls may be disproportionately affected by and are more vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing an increase in such impacts, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, land degradation, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, which further threaten health, food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and noting in this regard the implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[17]

Deeply concerned that the extreme situation of girls in child-headed households persists and that poverty, armed conflict, climate-related and other hazards, natural disasters, disease outbreaks, including the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and other humanitarian emergencies increase the incidence of child-headed households,

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[7] Resolution S-27/2, annex.

[8] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[9] Ibid., annex II.

[10] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[11] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[12] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[13] Resolution S-26/2, annex.

[14] Resolution 60/262, annex.

[15] Resolution 65/277, annex.

[16] Resolution 70/266, annex.

[17] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

forcing children, particularly girls, to undertake adult responsibilities, including being the main household earner and caring for younger siblings, and making them particularly vulnerable to poverty, violence, including physical and sexual violence, and discrimination, which seriously inhibits their development and violates and/or impairs the full enjoyment of their human rights,

Deeply concerned also about the continuing lack of recent information and statistics, disaggregated by sex, on the status of children in child-headed households, which are necessary to inform appropriate policy responses by Member States and the United Nations system,

Recognizing that women and girls are more vulnerable to HIV infection and that they bear a disproportionate burden of the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, including the unpaid care and domestic work related to the care of and support for those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, and that this negatively affects girls by depriving them of their childhood and diminishing their opportunities to receive an education, often resulting in their having to head households and increasing their vulnerability to the worst forms of child labour and to sexual exploitation,

Noting with concern that millions of girls are engaged in child labour and its worst forms, including those who have been victims of trafficking in persons and affected by armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies, that children without nationality or birth registration are vulnerable to trafficking in persons and child labour and that many children face the double burden of having to combine economic activities with unpaid care and domestic work, which deprive them of their childhood and hamper the full enjoyment of their right to education and opportunities for decent employment in the future, and noting in this regard the need to recognize, reduce and redistribute girls' disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work,

Recognizing that girl children are often at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence and forced labour, which, among other things, would hinder efforts towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those Goals that are relevant to gender equality and the empowerment of girls, and reaffirming the need to achieve gender equality to ensure a just and equitable world for girls, including by partnering with men and boys, as an important strategy for advancing the rights of the girl child,

Recognizing also that the empowerment of and investment in girls, which is critical for economic growth, and the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty, as well as the meaningful participation of girls in decisions that affect them, are key in breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and in promoting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights, and recognizing further that empowering girls requires their active participation in decision-making processes and as agents of change in their own lives and communities, including through girls' organizations with the active support and engagement of their parents, legal guardians, families and care providers, boys and men, as well as the wider community,

Deeply concerned about all forms of violence against children, including those that disproportionately affect girls, such as child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence, trafficking in persons and the use of information and communications technology and social media to perpetrate violence against women and girls, and, in addition, about the corresponding impunity and lack of accountability, and that violence against women and girls is underrecognized and underreported, particularly at the community level, which reflects discriminatory norms that reinforce the lower status of girls in society,

Deeply concerned also about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, including girls with disabilities, bearing in mind their specific needs, which often result in less access for girls to education, and to quality education, nutrition, including food allocation, and physical and mental

health-care services, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys, and in leaving them more vulnerable than boys to the consequences of unprotected and premature sexual relations and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and violence, abuse, rape, incest, honour-related crimes and harmful practices, such as female infanticide, child, early and forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Deeply concerned further that, despite its widespread practice, child, early and forced marriage is still underreported, recognizing that this requires further attention and that child, early and forced marriage exposes the girl child to greater risk of HIV and sexually transmitted infections, often leads to premature sexual relations, early pregnancy and early childbearing and increases the risk of obstetric fistula and high levels of maternal mortality and morbidity, and furthermore entails complications during pregnancy and childbirth, which often lead to disability, stillbirth and maternal death, particularly for young women and girls, which require appropriate prenatal and postnatal health-care services for mothers, including in the area of skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care, and noting with concern that this reduces girls' opportunities to complete their education, gain comprehensive knowledge, participate in the community or develop employable skills and is likely to have a long-term adverse impact on their physical and mental health and well-being, their employment opportunities and their quality of life and that of their children, and violates and/or impairs the full enjoyment of their human rights,

Deeply concerned that young women and girls are particularly affected by water scarcity, unsafe water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene, and concerned furthermore that girls, especially those in rural areas, are often excluded from full and continued participation in school owing to their burden of water procurement at home, a lack of water and sanitation facilities in schools and inadequate access to effective feminine hygiene products,

Emphasizing that increased and equal access to quality education for young people, especially adolescent girls, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, as well as health care, hygiene and sanitation, dramatically lowers their vulnerability to preventable diseases and infections, in particular HIV and other sexually transmitted infections,

Recognizing that, despite gains in providing access to education, girls are still more likely than boys to remain excluded from education, and recognizing also that among gendered barriers to girls' equal enjoyment of their right to education are child marriage, early pregnancy, gender-based violence, the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work and gender stereotypes and negative social norms that lead families and communities to place less value on girls' education when compared with that of boys,

Deeply concerned that school-related violence against girls, including sexual violence and harassment on the way to and from and at school, such as violence perpetrated by teachers, continues to deter girls' education and, in many cases, the transition to and completion of secondary education, and that these risks may influence parents' decision to allow girls to attend school,

Noting that school meals and take-home rations attract and retain children in schools, and recognizing that school feeding is an incentive to enhance enrolment and reduce absenteeism, especially for girls,

Stressing the need for the international community, the relevant United Nations entities, the specialized agencies, civil society and international financial institutions to continue to actively support, through the allocation of enhanced financial resources and technical assistance, targeted comprehensive programmes that address the needs and priorities of the girl child,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[18]

2. *Stresses* the need for the full and urgent implementation of the rights of the child, including the girl child, as provided under international human rights instruments, and urges States to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[1] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[2] the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[3] and the Optional Protocols thereto[4] as a matter of priority;

3. *Urges* all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138),[19] and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182),[20] of the International Labour Organization to consider doing so;

4. *Urges* States to develop or review relevant programmes that promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and equal access to basic social services, such as education, nutrition, water and sanitation, birth registration, health care, vaccinations and protection from diseases representing the major causes of mortality, including non-communicable diseases, and to mainstream a gender perspective into all development policies and programmes, including those specific to the girl child;

5. *Also urges* States to improve the situation of girl children living in poverty, including extreme poverty, deprived of adequate food and nutrition, water and sanitation facilities, with limited or no access to basic physical and mental health-care services, shelter, education, participation and protection;

6. *Recognizes* that ensuring equal access to inclusive, equitable and quality education requires transformations in education systems, mainstreaming a gender perspective into educational programmes, infrastructure development and teacher training, and in this regard calls upon States to invest in quality education, including through adequate financing, to ensure that all girls, including those who are marginalized or in vulnerable situations, enjoy their right to education;

7. *Notes* the role of the United Nations in supporting national Governments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[21] and in realizing girls' right to education;

8. *Calls upon* States to recognize the right to education on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination by making primary education compulsory and available free to all children, including those living in rural areas, and ensuring that all children have equal access to quality education, as well as making secondary and tertiary education available and accessible to all, in particular through the progressive introduction of free secondary education, bearing in mind that special measures to ensure equal access, including affirmative action, ensuring physical access to education, including by increasing financial incentives to families, improving the safety of girls on the way to and from school, ensuring that all schools are accessible, safe, secure and free from violence and providing hygienic, separate and adequate sanitation facilities, contribute to achieving equal opportunity and combating exclusion and ensuring school attendance, in particular for girls and children from low-income families and children who become heads of households;

9. *Calls upon* all States to place enhanced emphasis on quality education for the girl child, including catch-up and literacy education for those who did not receive formal education, special initiatives for keeping girls in school through post-primary education, including those who are already married or pregnant, to promote access to skills and entrepreneurship training for young women and to tackle gender

[18] A/72/218.
[19] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1015, No. 14862.
[20] Ibid., vol. 2133, No. 37245.
[21] Resolution 70/1.

stereotypes, in order to ensure that young women entering the labour market have opportunities to obtain full and productive employment and decent work, and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

10. *Encourages* States to adopt, as appropriate, and implement inclusive policies and programmes to promote girls' education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, including information and communications technology, throughout their education, by, inter alia, expanding the scope of education and training opportunities ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills, recognizing that girls who develop such skills may enjoy more academic success and higher-paying jobs in the future, and recognizing also that girls and women have an equally important role to play in these arenas as men and boys;

11. *Calls upon* States, with the support, where appropriate, of international organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations, to develop policies and programmes, giving priority to formal, informal and non-formal education programmes, including scientifically accurate and age-appropriate comprehensive education, relevant to cultural contexts, that provides adolescent girls and boys and young women and men in and out of school, consistent with their evolving capacities, and with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, with information on sexual and reproductive health and HIV prevention, gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, physical, psychological and pubertal development and power in relationships between women and men, to enable them to build self-esteem and informed decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills and to develop respectful relationships, in full partnership with young persons, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, educators and health-care providers, in order to, inter alia, enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection and other risks;

12. *Urges* States to acknowledge the different needs of girls and boys during their childhood and adolescence and, as appropriate, to make adapted investments that are consistent with and responsive to their changing needs, in particular ensuring that girls have access to clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and feminine hygiene products as well as private toilet facilities, including feminine hygiene product disposal facilities, in educational institutions and other public spaces, which will improve their health and access to education and increase their safety;

13. *Calls upon* States, in collaboration with civil society and other relevant actors, to promote educational and health practices in order to foster a culture in which menstruation is recognized as healthy and natural, and girls are not stigmatized on this basis, recognizing that girls' attendance at school can be affected by negative perceptions of menstruation and lack of means to maintain safe personal hygiene, such as water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools that meet the needs of girls;

14. *Urges* States to strengthen efforts to urgently eradicate all forms of discrimination against women and girls, and calls upon all States, the United Nations system and civil society to take measures to address the obstacles that continue to affect the achievement of the goals set forth in the Beijing Platform for Action,[9] as contained in paragraph 33 of the further actions and initiatives,[22] including reviewing remaining laws that discriminate against women and girls in order to modify or abolish them and, where appropriate, strengthening national mechanisms to implement inclusive policies and programmes for the girl child and, in some cases, to enhance coordination among responsible institutions for the realization of the human rights of girls, including access to justice, fighting impunity for perpetrators of and ensuring the availability of appropriate penalties for crimes of sexual violence committed against the girl child, and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in order to achieve those goals;

[22] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

15. *Also urges* States to ensure that the applicable conventions of the International Labour Organization relating to the employment of girls and boys are respected and effectively enforced and that girls who are employed have equal access to decent work and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, are protected from economic and sexual exploitation, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and abuse in the workplace, are aware of their rights and have access to formal and non-formal education, skills development and technical and vocational training, and urges States to develop gender-sensitive measures, including national action plans, where appropriate, to eliminate child labour and its worst forms, commercial sexual exploitation, hazardous forms of child labour, trafficking and slavery-like practices, including forced and bonded labour, and recruitment or use of children in armed conflict in violation of applicable international law, and to recognize that girls, including in child-headed households, face greater risks in this regard;

16. *Calls upon* States, with the support of relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, as appropriate, to take all measures necessary to ensure the right of girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and to develop sustainable health systems, strengthen existing ones to ensure primary health care with an integrated HIV response and make them more accessible to adolescent girls;

17. *Also calls upon* States to strengthen the capacity of national health systems, and in this regard invites the international community to assist national efforts, upon request, including by allocating adequate resources in order to provide the essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat those cases that occur by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, prenatal and postnatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care, to adolescent girls, including those living in poverty and in underserved rural areas where obstetric fistula is most common;

18. *Urges* all States to enact, uphold and strictly enforce laws and policies aimed at preventing and ending child, early and forced marriage and protecting those at risk and to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the informed, free and full consent of the intending spouses, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, to raise the minimum age for marriage, engage all relevant stakeholders, including girls, where necessary, and ensure that these laws are well known, to further develop and implement holistic, comprehensive and coordinated policies, plans of action and programmes and to support already married girls and adolescents and ensure the provision of viable alternatives and institutional support, especially educational opportunities for girls, to ensure the survival, protection, development and advancement of the girl child in order to promote and protect the full enjoyment of her human rights and to ensure equal opportunities for girls, including by making such plans an integral part of her total development process;

19. *Urges* States to enact, as appropriate, and implement legislation to protect, support and empower children living in child-headed households, in particular those headed by girls, that includes provisions to ensure their physical, psychosocial and economic well-being, including protecting their property and inheritance rights, access to health-care services, nutrition, clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, education, scholarships and training opportunities, and that their family is protected and assisted in staying together, including through, where appropriate, social protection programmes and economic support;

20. *Also urges* States to forge partnerships with relevant stakeholders, particularly by working with and involving communities in developing programmes and mechanisms designed to ensure the safety and protection as well as the

empowerment of children, especially girls, and to ensure that they receive the support they need from their communities;

21. *Calls upon* States to strengthen research, data collection and analysis on the girl child, disaggregated by household structure, sex, age, disability status, economic situation, marital status and geographical location, and improve gender statistics on time use, unpaid care work and water and sanitation in order to provide a better understanding of the situations of girls, especially of the multiple forms of discrimination that they face, and to inform the development of necessary policies and programme responses, which should take a holistic age-appropriate approach to addressing the full range of the forms of discrimination that girls may face, in order to protect their rights effectively;

22. *Urges* States to take all measures necessary to ensure the full enjoyment by girls with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, on an equal basis with other children, and to adopt, implement and strengthen appropriate policies and programmes designed to address their needs;

23. *Urges* all States to enact and enforce legislation to protect girls from all forms of violence, discrimination, exploitation and harmful practices in all settings, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, female genital mutilation, rape, domestic violence, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, trafficking and forced migration, forced labour and child, early and forced marriage, and to develop age-appropriate, safe, confidential and disability-accessible programmes and medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence and discrimination;

24. *Urges* States to strengthen and intensify their efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of school-related violence against girls and to hold perpetrators accountable;

25. *Calls upon* all States to enact and enforce the necessary legislative or other measures, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and the media, to prevent the distribution over the Internet of child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, ensuring that adequate mechanisms are in place to enable the reporting and removal of such material and that its creators, distributors and collectors are prosecuted, as appropriate;

26. *Urges* States to formulate or review, as needed, comprehensive, multidisciplinary and coordinated national plans, programmes or strategies to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, which should have dedicated resources, be widely disseminated and provide targets and timetables for implementation, as well as effective domestic enforcement procedures through the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms involving all parties concerned, including consultations with women's organizations, giving attention to the recommendations relating to the girl child of the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children;

27. *Also urges* States to ensure that children who are capable of forming their own views have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, with the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child, to ensure that this right is fully and equally enjoyed by the girl child, to meaningfully involve girl children, including those with special needs, as well as girls with disabilities, and their representative organizations in decision-making processes, as appropriate, and to include them as full partners in identifying their own needs and in developing, planning, implementing and assessing policies

and programmes to meet those needs, with a view to ensuring their full and effective participation;

28. *Recognizes* that a considerable number of girl children are particularly vulnerable, including orphans, children living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children, children affected by trafficking and sexual and economic exploitation, children living with or affected by HIV and AIDS, and children who are incarcerated or who live without parental support, and therefore urges States, with the support of the international community, where relevant, to take appropriate measures to address the needs of such children by implementing national, subregional and regional policies and strategies to build and strengthen governmental, community and family capacities to provide a supportive environment for such children, including by providing appropriate counselling and psychosocial support, and ensuring their safety, enrolment in school and access to shelter, good nutrition and health and social services on an equal basis with other children;

29. *Urges* all States and the international community to respect, promote and protect the rights of the girl child, taking into account the particular vulnerabilities of the girl child in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations and in climate-related and other hazards and natural disasters, as well as in other humanitarian emergencies, all of which may result in the creation of child-headed households, and urges States to take special measures for the protection of girls in all phases of humanitarian emergencies, from relief to recovery, and in particular to ensure that children have access to basic services, which include clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, to protect them from sexually transmitted infections, including HIV infection, gender-based violence, including rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, torture, abduction and trafficking, including forced labour, paying special attention to refugee and displaced girls, and to take into account their special needs in disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation assistance and reintegration processes;

30. *Deplores* all acts of sexual exploitation and abuse of and trafficking in women and children, including in humanitarian crises and by humanitarian workers and peacekeepers, including military, police and civilian personnel involved in United Nations operations, takes note of the voluntary compact on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse introduced by the Secretary-General, welcomes the efforts undertaken by United Nations agencies and peacekeeping operations to implement a zero-tolerance policy in this regard, and requests the Secretary-General or the Member States from which those humanitarian workers originate and personnel-contributing countries to continue to take all appropriate action necessary to combat such abuses and exploitation by such personnel, including through the full implementation without delay of those measures adopted in the relevant General Assembly resolutions based on recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations;[23]

31. *Calls upon* Member States to devise, enforce and strengthen effective child- and youth-sensitive measures to combat, eliminate and prosecute all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy within wider efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including by taking effective measures against the criminalization of girls who are victims of exploitation and ensuring that girls who have been exploited receive access to the necessary psychosocial support, and in this regard urges Member States, the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media, to fully and effectively implement the relevant provisions of the United Nations Global Plan of

[23] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 19* (A/59/19/Rev.1).

Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons[24] and the activities outlined therein, with full respect for the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;[25]

32. *Reaffirms* that everyone has a right to a nationality as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[26] and in this regard calls upon States that have not yet done so to consider adopting and implementing nationality legislation consistent with their applicable obligations under international law and to facilitate the acquisition of nationality by and ensure free or low-cost birth registration for children born on their territories or their nationals abroad who would otherwise be stateless;

33. *Calls upon* Governments, civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and full respect for and the enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of age-appropriate and gender-sensitive information material on those rights to all sectors of society, in particular to children;

34. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to ensure that all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Health Organization, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organization, take into account the rights and the particular needs of the girl child in country programmes of cooperation in accordance with national priorities, including through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

35. *Requests* all human rights treaty bodies and the human rights mechanisms of the Human Rights Council, including the special procedures, to adopt regularly and systematically a gender perspective in the implementation of their mandates and to include in their reports information on the qualitative analysis of violations of the human rights of women and girls, and encourages the strengthening of cooperation and coordination in that regard;

36. *Requests* States to ensure that, in all policies and programmes designed to provide comprehensive HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, particular attention and support are given to the girl child at risk, living with or affected by HIV, including pregnant girls and young and adolescent mothers and girls with disabilities, and child heads of households, with a view to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3, in particular the target of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030;

37. *Invites* States to promote initiatives aimed at reducing the prices of antiretroviral drugs, especially second-line drugs, available to the girl child, including bilateral and private sector initiatives as well as initiatives on a voluntary basis taken by groups of States, including those based on innovative financing mechanisms that contribute to the mobilization of resources for social development, including those that aim to provide further access to drugs at affordable prices to developing countries on a sustainable and predictable basis, and in this regard takes note of the International Drug Purchase Facility, UNITAID;

38. *Calls upon* all States to integrate food and nutritional support with the goal that children, especially girl children, have access at all times to sufficient, safe and

[24] Resolution 64/293.

[25] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2237, No. 39574.

[26] Resolution 217 A (III).

nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food requirements for an active and healthy life;

39. *Calls upon* States to ensure that social protection programmes, including HIV-sensitive programmes, are provided to orphans and other vulnerable children, with particular attention to addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of girl children, ensuring school attendance and protecting their rights;

40. *Urges* States and the international community to increase resources at all levels, particularly in the education and health sectors, so as to enable young people, especially girls, to gain the knowledge, attitudes and life skills that they need to fulfil their social, economic and other potential and overcome their challenges, including the prevention of HIV infection and early pregnancy, and to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health;

41. *Urges* States, the international community, relevant United Nations entities, civil society and international financial institutions to continue to actively support, through the allocation of financial resources and technical assistance, efforts to address girls' right and access to education;

42. *Strongly calls upon* States and the international community to create an environment in which the well-being of the girl child is ensured, inter alia, by cooperating, supporting and participating in global efforts towards the full and timely realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development[5] and of all other relevant internationally agreed development goals, in particular for the eradication of poverty at the global, regional and country levels, recognizing that strengthened availability and effective allocation of resources are required at all levels in this regard, and reaffirming that investment in children, particularly girls, and the realization of their rights are among the most effective ways to eradicate poverty;

43. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including a status analysis on improvements in the social, economic and political investments made by Member States towards empowering girls in rural areas, using information provided by Member States, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution on the well-being of the girl child.

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/436)*]

72/155. Rights of indigenous peoples

The General Assembly,

Recalling all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council relating to the rights of indigenous peoples, reaffirming its resolutions 65/198 of 21 December 2010, 66/142 of 19 December 2011, 67/153 of 20 December 2012, 68/149 of 18 December 2013, 69/2 of 22 September 2014, 69/159 of 18 December 2014, 70/232 of 23 December 2015, 71/178 of 19 December 2016 and 71/321 of 8 September 2017, and recalling Human Rights Council resolutions 27/13 of 25 September 2014,[1] 30/4 of 1 October 2015,[2] 33/12 and 33/13 of 29 September 2016[3] and 36/14 of 28 September 2017,[4]

Reaffirming the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,[5] which addresses the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples,

Reaffirming also the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, held in New York on 22 and 23 September 2014,[6] in which Heads of State and Government, ministers and representatives of Member States reiterated the important and continuing role of the United Nations in promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, recalling the inclusive preparatory process for the high-level plenary meeting, including the comprehensive engagement of the representatives of indigenous peoples, and welcoming and reaffirming the commitments, measures and

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigenda (A/69/53/Add.1, A/69/53/Add.1/Corr.1 and A/69/53/Add.1/Corr.2), chap. IV, sect. A.
[2] Ibid., *Seventieth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/70/53/Add.1), chap. III.
[3] Ibid., *Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigendum (A/71/53/Add.1 and A/71/53/Add.1/Corr.1), chap. II.
[4] Ibid., *Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/72/53/Add.1), chap. III.
[5] Resolution 61/295, annex.
[6] Resolution 69/2.

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efforts undertaken by States, the United Nations system, indigenous peoples and other actors in its implementation,

Encouraging the active engagement of indigenous peoples in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, including at the regional and global levels,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[7] and stressing the need to ensure that no one is left behind, including indigenous peoples, who should participate in, contribute to and benefit without discrimination from the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and encouraging Member States to give due consideration to all the rights of indigenous peoples while implementing the 2030 Agenda,

Stressing the importance of promoting and pursuing the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples also through international cooperation to support national and regional efforts to achieve the ends of the Declaration, including the right to maintain and strengthen the distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions of indigenous peoples and the right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State,

Welcoming the organization of the high-level event to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, in 2017, which took stock of the achievements of the preceding 10 years and assessed the remaining challenges for the rights of indigenous peoples and further follow-up to the Declaration,

Bearing in mind the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants[8] and the commitments of Member States to address, in accordance with their respective obligations under international law, the special needs of all people in vulnerable situations who are travelling within large movements of refugees and migrants, including indigenous peoples,

Taking note with appreciation of the consideration of the empowerment of indigenous women as the focus area of the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women, during which the Commission recognized that the economic empowerment, inclusion and development of indigenous women, including through the establishment of indigenous-owned businesses, could enable them to improve their social, cultural, civil and political engagement, achieve greater economic independence and build more sustainable and resilient communities,

Recognizing that violence against indigenous women and girls has a negative impact on their enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and constitutes a major impediment to women's full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy and political decision-making, and in this regard recalling Human Rights Council resolution 32/19 of 1 July 2016, entitled "Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, including indigenous women and girls",[9] which brings closer attention to this issue, and recognizing also the negative effects of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination,

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[7] Resolution 70/1.

[8] Resolution 71/1.

[9] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/71/53), chap. V, sect. A.

Bearing in mind the importance of the empowerment and capacity-building of indigenous women and youth, including their full and effective participation in decision-making processes in matters that affect them directly, including policies, programmes and resources, where relevant, that target the well-being of indigenous women, children and youth, in particular in the areas of health, education, employment and the transmission of traditional knowledge, languages and practices, and the importance of taking measures to promote awareness and understanding of their rights,

Deeply concerned at the vast number of endangered languages, in particular indigenous languages, and stressing that, despite the continuing efforts, there is an urgent need to preserve, promote and revitalize endangered languages, in particular indigenous languages,

Recognizing the importance to indigenous peoples of revitalizing, using, developing and transmitting to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literature,

Expressing concern that, in some cases, suicide rates in indigenous peoples' communities, in particular among indigenous youth and children, are significantly higher than in the general population,

Bearing in mind the importance of promoting respect for the rights of indigenous children, in particular eliminating the worst forms of child labour, in accordance with international law, including relevant human rights law and international labour law obligations,

Recognizing the importance of access to justice in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and individuals and the need to examine and take steps to remove obstacles to justice, especially for indigenous women, indigenous children, youth, older persons and indigenous persons with disabilities,

Underlining the responsibility of transnational corporations and other business enterprises to respect all human rights, applicable laws and international principles[10] and operate transparently and in a socially and environmentally responsible manner, and emphasizing the need to refrain from negatively affecting the well-being of indigenous peoples and to take further action towards corporate responsibility and accountability, including the prevention, mitigation and remediation of human rights abuses,

Recognizing the importance of free, prior and informed consent, as outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and noting that the next study of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples will focus on the theme of free, prior and informed consent,

Recognizing also the value and the diversity of the cultures and the form of social organization of indigenous peoples and their holistic traditional knowledge of their lands, natural resources and environment,

Recognizing further the importance of traditional sustainable agricultural practices, including traditional seed supply systems, as well as access to credit and other financial services, markets, secure land tenure, health care and health-care services, social services, education, training, knowledge and appropriate and affordable technologies, including efficient irrigation, the reuse of treated wastewater and water harvesting and storage for indigenous peoples and others living in rural areas,

[10] Including the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework (A/HRC/17/31, annex).

Recognizing the importance of facilitating indigenous peoples' livelihoods, which may be achieved by, inter alia, the recognition of their traditions, adequate public policies and economic empowerment,

Recognizing also that the economic empowerment, inclusion and development of indigenous peoples, including through the establishment of indigenous-owned businesses, can enable them to improve their social, cultural, civil and political engagement, achieve greater economic independence and build more sustainable and resilient communities, and noting the contribution of indigenous peoples to the broader economy,

Concerned about the extreme disadvantages that indigenous peoples have typically faced across a range of social and economic indicators and about the impediments to their full enjoyment of their rights,

Stressing the need to pay particular attention to the rights and special needs of indigenous women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including in the process of protecting and promoting their access to justice,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of indigenous peoples, takes note of the report of the Special Rapporteur,[11] and encourages all Governments to respond favourably to her requests for visits;

2. *Urges* Governments and the United Nations system, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples through their representatives and institutions, to continue to implement, when appropriate, measures at the national level, including legislative, policy and administrative measures, to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples[5] and to promote awareness of it among all sectors of society, including members of legislatures, the judiciary and the civil service, as well as among indigenous peoples, and invites international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, national human rights institutions, where they exist, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and other relevant actors to contribute to those efforts;

3. *Underscores* the importance of implementing the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples,[6] and reiterates the commitment of Member States to cooperating with indigenous peoples, through their own representative institutions, to develop and implement national action plans, strategies or other measures, where relevant, to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

4. *Encourages* the leadership of the Secretary-General and of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, as the responsible senior official of the United Nations system, in overseeing the implementation of and following up on the system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, raising awareness of the rights of indigenous peoples and increasing the coherence of the activities of the system in this regard, and encourages the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to implement this plan in full alignment with national development needs and priorities;

[11] A/72/186.

5. *Encourages* Member States, resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, within their mandates and in coordination with the Governments concerned, to involve indigenous peoples regarding issues affecting them in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and country programme action plans;

6. *Encourages* Member States to work towards achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the light of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration;

7. *Encourages* those States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), of the International Labour Organization[12] to consider doing so;

8. *Urges* Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to contribute to the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues, the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Indigenous Peoples' Partnership, invites indigenous organizations and private institutions and individuals to do likewise, and notes the importance of accessibility, accountability, transparency and balanced geographical distribution in the management of these funds;

9. *Decides* to continue to observe the International Day of Indigenous Peoples every year on 9 August, and requests the Secretary-General to support the observance of the Day from within existing resources;

10. *Encourages* Member States and all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, the private sector and academia, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to observe the International Day of Indigenous Peoples in an appropriate manner, including through educational and public awareness-raising activities;

11. *Reaffirms* the proclamation of the year beginning on 1 January 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages to draw attention to the critical loss of indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote indigenous languages, including as an educational medium, and to take further urgent steps to that end at the national and international levels, and the invitation to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to serve as the lead agency for the Year, in collaboration with other relevant agencies, within existing resources;

12. *Encourages* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to lead the preparations for the International Year of Indigenous Languages in 2019, in collaboration with other relevant agencies as well as indigenous peoples;

13. *Encourages* States to consider including in their reports related to indigenous peoples and women information on the progress made and challenges in the implementation of Commission on the Status of Women resolutions 49/7 of 11 March 2005, entitled "Indigenous women: beyond the ten-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action",[13] and 56/4 of 9 March 2012, entitled "Indigenous women: key actors in poverty and hunger eradication";[14]

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[12] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1650, No. 28383.

[13] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and E/2005/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. D.

[14] Ibid., *2012, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2012/27 and E/2012/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. D.

14. *Encourages* Member States to give due consideration to all the rights of indigenous peoples in fulfilling the commitments undertaken in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[7] and in the elaboration of national programmes;

15. *Encourages* States to consider including in their voluntary national reviews for the high-level political forum on sustainable development and their national and global reports information related to indigenous peoples on the progress made and challenges in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, bearing in mind paragraphs 78 and 79 of the 2030 Agenda, and also encourages States to compile disaggregated data to measure progress and to ensure that no one is left behind;

16. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to include information pertinent to indigenous peoples in the forthcoming annual reports on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals;

17. *Stresses* the need to strengthen the commitment of States and the entities of the United Nations system to mainstream the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples into development policies and programmes at the national, regional and international levels, and encourages them to give due consideration to the rights of indigenous peoples in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda;

18. *Also stresses* the need for indigenous peoples of all regions to contribute to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, and encourages States to engage with indigenous peoples at the local, national and regional levels in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals;

19. *Invites* the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples to give due consideration, within their mandates, to the rights of indigenous peoples as related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

20. *Encourages* the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to continue to provide inputs on indigenous issues to the high-level political forum on sustainable development for consideration in its thematic reviews;

21. *Underlines* the need to intensify efforts, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against indigenous women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities and to support measures that will ensure their empowerment and full and effective participation in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas and eliminate structural and legal barriers to their full, equal and effective participation in political, economic, social and cultural life;

22. *Reaffirms* the importance of effective accountability with regard to violence against indigenous women and girls, including sexual violence, abuse and exploitation, and of taking adequate measures to prevent and eliminate such violence;

23. *Welcomes* the agreed conclusions of the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women,[15] in which Governments were urged to take measures to promote the economic empowerment of indigenous women, including by ensuring access to quality and inclusive education and meaningful participation in the economy by addressing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and barriers they face, including violence, and to promote their participation in relevant decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas, while respecting and protecting their traditional and ancestral knowledge, and noting the importance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for indigenous women and girls;

[15] Ibid., *2017, Supplement No. 7* (E/2017/27), chap. I, sect. A.

24. *Encourages* Governments to redouble efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, both in legislation and in practice, in the context of respect for the human rights of indigenous children, including through international cooperation, as appropriate;

25. *Encourages* transnational corporations and other business enterprises to respect human rights, including the rights of indigenous children, and to eliminate the worst forms of child labour from their operations;

26. *Underscores* the need to ensure equal protection of the law and equality before the courts for indigenous women and girls at all levels and, to that end, the importance of providing systematic gender-sensitivity training, as appropriate, for police and security forces, prosecutors, judges and lawyers, integrating gender considerations into security sector reform initiatives, developing protocols and guidelines and enhancing or putting in place appropriate accountability measures for adjudicators;

27. *Encourages* States and entities of the United Nations system to strengthen international cooperation, including to address the disadvantages faced by indigenous peoples, and to increase technical cooperation and financial assistance in this regard;

28. *Encourages* the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in accordance with their mandates, to carry out research and evidence-gathering on the prevalence and root causes of suicide among indigenous youth and children and good practices on its prevention and to consider developing, as appropriate, strategies or policies, consistent with national priorities, in cooperation with Member States, to tackle it, including through consultation with indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous youth organizations;

29. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work led by the Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions in conducting consultations with Member States, indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions from all regions of the world and existing mechanisms of the United Nations on possible measures to enable the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them, which led to the adoption of Assembly resolution 71/321 and its decision to continue its consideration of possible further measures necessary to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in relevant United Nations meetings on issues affecting them at its seventy-fifth session, taking into account the achievements in that regard of other bodies and organizations throughout the United Nations system, to be preceded by consultations with indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions from all regions of the world as an input to the intergovernmental process;

30. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question at its seventy-third session, under the item entitled "Rights of indigenous peoples", and to maintain in the provisional agenda the sub-item entitled "Follow-up to the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples".

73rd plenary meeting
19 December 2017

United Nations A/RES/72/156

General Assembly

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Seventy-second session
Agenda item 70 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/437)*]

72/156. Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The General Assembly,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination[3] and other relevant human rights instruments,

Recalling the provisions of Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2004/16 of 16 April 2004[4] and 2005/5 of 14 April 2005[5] and relevant Human Rights Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 7/34 of 28 March 2008,[6] 18/15 of 29 September 2011[7] and 21/33 of 28 September 2012,[8] as well as General Assembly resolutions 60/143 of 16 December 2005, 61/147 of 19 December 2006, 62/142 of 18 December 2007, 63/162 of 18 December 2008, 64/147 of 18 December 2009, 65/199 of 21 December 2010, 66/143 of 19 December 2011, 67/154 of 20 December 2012, 68/150 of 18 December 2013, 69/160 of 18 December 2014, 70/139 of 17 December 2015 and 71/179 of 19 December 2016 on this issue, and its resolutions 61/149 of 19 December 2006, 62/220 of 22 December 2007, 63/242 of 24 December

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.
[4] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 3* (E/2004/23), chap. II, sect. A.
[5] Ibid., *2005, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/2005/23, E/2005/23/Corr.1 and E/2005/23/Corr.2), chap. II, sect. A.
[6] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/63/53), chap. II.
[7] Ibid., *Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigendum (A/66/53/Add.1 and A/66/53/Add.1/Corr.1), chap. II.
[8] Ibid., *Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/67/53/Add.1), chap. II.

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2008, 64/148 of 18 December 2009, 65/240 of 24 December 2010, 66/144 of 19 December 2011, 67/155 of 20 December 2012, 68/151 of 18 December 2013, 69/162 of 18 December 2014 and 70/140 of 17 December 2015, and its resolution 71/181 of 19 December 2016, entitled "A global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action",

Acknowledging other important initiatives of the General Assembly aimed at raising awareness about the suffering of victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and all forms of discrimination, including in the historical perspective, in particular regarding commemoration of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade,

Recalling the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal and the Judgment of the Tribunal, which recognized as criminal, inter alia, the SS organization and all its integral parts, including the Waffen SS, through its officially accepted members implicated in or with knowledge of the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity connected with the Second World War, as well as other relevant provisions of the Charter and the Judgment,

Recalling also the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance on 8 September 2001,[9] in particular paragraph 2 of the Declaration and paragraph 86 of the Programme of Action, as well as the relevant provisions of the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference of 24 April 2009,[10] in particular paragraphs 11 and 54,

Alarmed at the spread in many parts of the world of various extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups, as well as racist extremist movements and ideologies, and at the fact that this trend has resulted in the implementation of discriminatory measures, policies and bills at the local or national levels,

Deeply concerned by all recent manifestations of violence and terrorism incited by violent nationalism, racism, xenophobia and related intolerance, including during sports events,

Recognizing with deep concern the alarming increase in instances of discrimination, intolerance and extremist violence motivated by anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Christianophobia and prejudices against persons of other ethnic origins, religions and beliefs,

Mindful of the horrors of the Second World War, and stressing in this regard that the victory over Nazism in the Second World War contributed to establishing the conditions for the creation of the United Nations, designed to prevent future wars and save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,

1. *Reaffirms* the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration[9] and of the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference,[10] in which States condemned the persistence and resurgence of neo-Nazism, neo-Fascism and violent nationalist ideologies based on racial and national prejudice and stated that those phenomena could never be justified in any instance or in any circumstances;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination,

[9] See A/CONF.189/12 and A/CONF.189/12/Corr.1, chap. I.
[10] See A/CONF.211/8, chap. I.

xenophobia and related intolerance, prepared in accordance with the request contained in its resolution 71/179;[11]

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and his Office for their efforts to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including the maintenance by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of the database on practical means to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

4. *Expresses deep concern* about the glorification, in any form, of the Nazi movement, neo-Nazism and former members of the Waffen SS organization, including by erecting monuments and memorials and holding public demonstrations in the name of the glorification of the Nazi past, the Nazi movement and neo-Nazism, as well as by declaring or attempting to declare such members and those who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition and collaborated with the Nazi movement participants in national liberation movements;

5. *Calls for* the universal ratification and effective implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[3] and encourages those States parties that have not yet done so to consider making the declaration under its article 14, thus providing the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination with the competence to receive and consider communications from individuals or groups of individuals within their jurisdiction claiming to be victims of a violation by a State party of any of the rights set forth in the Convention;

6. *Encourages* States to adopt the legislation necessary to combat racism while ensuring that the definition of racial discrimination set out therein complies with article 1 of the Convention;

7. *Encourages* those States that have made reservations to article 4 of the Convention to give serious consideration to withdrawing such reservations as a matter of priority, as stressed by the Special Rapporteur;

8. *Recalls* that any legislative or constitutional measures adopted with a view to countering extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups and similar extremist ideological movements, should be in conformity with the relevant international human rights norms, in particular articles 4 and 5 of the Convention and articles 19 to 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;[2]

9. *Encourages* States parties to the Convention to ensure that their legislation incorporates the provisions of the Convention, including those of article 4;

10. *Emphasizes once more* the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur that "any commemorative celebration of the Nazi regime, its allies and related organizations, whether official or unofficial, should be prohibited" by States,[12] also emphasizes that such manifestations do injustice to the memory of the countless victims of the Second World War and negatively influence children and young people, and stresses in this regard that it is important that States take measures, in accordance with international human rights law, to counteract any celebration of the Nazi SS organization and all its integral parts, including the Waffen SS, and that failure by States to effectively address such practices is incompatible with the obligations of States Members of the United Nations under its Charter;

11. *Expresses deep concern* about increased frequency of attempts and activities intended to desecrate or demolish monuments erected in remembrance of

[11] A/72/291.

[12] Ibid., para. 79.

those who fought against Nazism during the Second World War, as well as to unlawfully exhume or remove the remains of such persons, and in this regard urges States to fully comply with their relevant obligations, inter alia, under article 34 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949;[13]

12. *Firmly condemns* incidents that glorify and promote Nazism, such as incidents involving pro-Nazi graffiti and paintings, including on monuments dedicated to victims of the Second World War;

13. *Notes with concern* the increase in the number of racist incidents worldwide, including the rise of skinhead groups, which have been responsible for many of these incidents, as well as the resurgence of racist and xenophobic violence targeting, inter alia, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, or on any other grounds, including arson attacks on houses and vandalization of schools and places of worship;

14. *Reaffirms* that such acts may be qualified as falling within the scope of the Convention, that they may not be justified when they fall outside the scope of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association as well as the rights to freedom of expression and that they may fall within the scope of article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and may be subject to certain restrictions, as set out in articles 19, 21 and 22 of the Covenant;

15. *Encourages* States to take concrete measures, including legislative and educational ones, in order to prevent revisionism in respect of the Second World War and the denial of the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during the Second World War;

16. *Condemns without reservation* any denial of or attempt to deny the Holocaust, as well as any manifestation of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or violence against persons or communities on the basis of ethnic origin or religious belief;

17. *Welcomes* the call of the Special Rapporteur for the active preservation of those Holocaust sites that served as Nazi death camps, concentration and forced labour camps and prisons, as well as his encouragement to States to take measures, including legislative, law enforcement and educational measures, to put an end to all forms of Holocaust denial;[14]

18. *Calls upon* States to continue to take adequate steps, including through national legislation, in accordance with international human rights law, aimed at the prevention of hate speech and incitement to violence against persons in vulnerable situations and, where necessary, to consider reviewing national anti-racism legislation in the light of the increasingly open expression of hate speech and incitement to violence against such persons;

19. *Expresses deep concern* about attempts at commercial advertising aimed at exploiting the sufferings of the victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the Second World War by the Nazi regime;

20. *Stresses* that the practices described above do injustice to the memory of the countless victims of crimes against humanity committed in the Second World War, in particular those committed by the SS organization and by those who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition and collaborated with the Nazi movement, and may negatively influence children and young people, and that failure by States to effectively address such practices is incompatible with the obligations of States

[13] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1125, No. 17512.

[14] A/72/291, para. 91.

Members of the United Nations under its Charter, including those related to the purposes and principles of the Organization;

21. *Also stresses* that all such practices fuel contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and contribute to the spread and multiplication of various extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups, and in this regard calls for increased vigilance;

22. *Expresses concern* that the human rights and democratic challenges posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups are universal and no country is immune to them;

23. *Emphasizes* the need to take the measures necessary to put an end to the practices described above, and calls upon States and all other stakeholders to take more effective measures in accordance with international human rights law to prevent and combat those phenomena and extremist movements, which pose a real threat to democratic values, and to increase their vigilance and be proactive in strengthening their efforts to recognize and effectively address those challenges;

24. *Underlines* the importance of data and statistics on racist and xenophobic crimes for identifying the types of offences committed, the profiles of victims and of perpetrators and whether the latter are affiliated with extremist movements or groups, thus enhancing better understanding of the phenomenon and identifying effective measures to address such racist and xenophobic crimes, and recalls in this regard the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[15] on data, monitoring and accountability, including collecting disaggregated data;

25. *Encourages* States to adopt further measures to provide training for the police and other law enforcement bodies on the ideologies of extremist political parties, movements and groups whose advocacy constitutes incitement to racist and xenophobic violence, to strengthen their capacity to address racist and xenophobic crimes, to fulfil their responsibility for bringing to justice the perpetrators of such crimes and to combat impunity;

26. *Expresses deep concern* about the increased number of seats occupied by representatives of extremist parties of a racist or xenophobic character in a number of national and local parliaments, and emphasizes in this regard the need for all democratic political parties to base their programmes and activities on respect for human rights and freedoms, democracy, the rule of law and good governance and to condemn all messages disseminating ideas that are based on racial superiority or hatred and that have the objective of fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

27. *Notes with appreciation*, in this regard, the call of the Special Rapporteur upon political leaders and parties to strongly condemn incitement to racial discrimination or xenophobia, to promote tolerance and respect and to refrain from forming coalitions with extremist parties of a racist or xenophobic character;[16]

28. *Expresses concern* that ethnic profiling and police violence against persons in vulnerable situations discourage victims from seeking redress owing to distrust of the legal system, and in this regard encourages States to improve diversity within law enforcement agencies and to impose appropriate sanctions against those within the public service found guilty of racially motivated violence or of using hate speech;

29. *Expresses deep concern* about the increase in reported cases of racist and xenophobic manifestations during sports events, including those committed by

[15] Resolution 70/1.

[16] A/72/291, para. 83.

extremist groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups, and calls upon States, sports federations and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen measures to prevent such incidents, while also welcoming the steps that many States, sports federations and clubs have taken to eliminate racism at sporting events, including through sport practised without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which require human understanding, tolerance, inclusion, fair play and solidarity;

30. *Recalls* the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur to introduce into national criminal law a provision according to which committing an offence with racist or xenophobic motivations or aims constitutes an aggravating circumstance, allowing for enhanced penalties,[17] and encourages those States whose legislation does not contain such provisions to consider that recommendation;

31. *Notes* measures taken by States to prevent discrimination against, in particular but not limited to, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, people of African descent, Roma, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and to ensure their integration into society, urges States to ensure the full and effective implementation of legal, policy and institutional measures protecting these individuals and groups, and recommends that States effectively guarantee to these individuals and groups, without discrimination of any kind, their human rights, including the right to safety and security, access to justice, adequate reparation and appropriate information about their rights, as well as the prosecution and adequate punishment of those responsible for racist and xenophobic crimes against them, including the right to seek reparation or satisfaction for damages suffered as a result of such crimes;

32. *Underlines* that the roots of extremism are multifaceted and must be addressed through adequate measures such as education, awareness-raising and the promotion of dialogue, and in this regard recommends the increase of measures to raise awareness among young people of the dangers of the ideologies and activities of extremist political parties, movements and groups;

33. *Reaffirms*, in this regard, the particular importance of all forms of education, including human rights education, as a complement to legislative measures, and calls upon States to continue to invest in education, in both conventional and non-conventional curricula, inter alia, in order to transform attitudes and counteract ideas of racial hierarchies and superiority, and counter their negative influence, and to promote the values of non-discrimination, equality and respect for all, as outlined by the Special Rapporteur;

34. *Recognizes* the paramount role of education in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, especially in promoting the principles of tolerance, inclusion and respect for ethnic, religious and cultural diversity and preventing the spread of extremist racist and xenophobic movements and ideas;

35. *Emphasizes* the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur presented at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, in which he emphasized the importance of history classes in teaching the dramatic events and human suffering which arose out of the adoption of ideologies such as Nazism and Fascism;[18]

36. *Stresses* the importance of other positive measures and initiatives aimed at bringing communities together and providing them with space for genuine dialogue, such as round tables, working groups and seminars, including training seminars for State agents and media professionals, as well as awareness-raising activities,

[17] A/69/334, para. 81.

[18] A/64/295, para. 104.

especially those initiated by civil society representatives, which require continued State support;

37. *Underlines* the positive role that relevant United Nations entities and programmes, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, can play in the aforementioned areas;

38. *Reaffirms* article 4 of the Convention, according to which States parties condemn all propaganda and all organizations which are based on ideas or theories of superiority of one race or group of persons of one colour or ethnic origin, or which attempt to justify or promote racial hatred and discrimination in any form, and undertake to adopt immediate and positive measures designed to eradicate all incitement to, or acts of, such discrimination and, to this end, with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and the rights expressly set forth in article 5 of the Convention, inter alia:

(a) Shall declare an offence punishable by law all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, and incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, and also the provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof;

(b) Shall declare illegal and prohibit organizations, and also organized and all other propaganda activities, which promote and incite racial discrimination, and shall recognize participation in such organizations or activities as an offence punishable by law;

(c) Shall not permit public authorities or public institutions, national or local, to promote or incite racial discrimination;

39. *Also reaffirms* that, as underlined in paragraph 13 of the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference, any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence should be prohibited by law, that all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, or incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts, shall be declared offences punishable by law, in accordance with the international obligations of States, and that these prohibitions are consistent with freedom of opinion and expression;

40. *Recognizes* the positive role that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, as well as full respect for the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, including through the Internet, can play in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

41. *Expresses concern* about the increased use of the Internet to promote and disseminate racism, racial hatred, xenophobia, racial discrimination and related intolerance, and in this regard calls upon States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to counter the dissemination of the above-mentioned ideas while respecting their obligations under articles 19 and 20 of the Covenant, which guarantee the right to freedom of expression and outline the grounds on which the exercise of this right can be legitimately restricted;

42. *Recognizes* the need to promote the use of new information and communications technologies, including the Internet, to contribute to the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

43. *Also recognizes* the positive role that the media can play in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, promoting a culture of tolerance and inclusion and representing the diversity of a multicultural society;

44. *Encourages* States, civil society and other relevant stakeholders to use all opportunities, including those provided by the Internet and social media, to counter, in accordance with international human rights law, the dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred and to promote the values of equality, non-discrimination, diversity and democracy;

45. *Encourages* national human rights institutions, where they exist, to develop appropriate programmes to promote tolerance, inclusion and respect for all and to collect relevant information in this regard;

46. *Notes* the importance of strengthening cooperation at the regional and international levels with the aim of countering all manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular regarding issues raised in the present resolution;

47. *Stresses* the importance of cooperating closely with civil society and international and regional human rights mechanisms in order to counter effectively all manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups, and other similar extremist ideological movements that incite racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

48. *Recalls* the request of the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 2005/5,[3] that the Special Rapporteur continue to reflect on this issue, make relevant recommendations in his future reports and seek and take into account in this regard the views of Governments and non-governmental organizations;

49. *Invites* States to consider including in their reports for the universal periodic review and their reports to relevant treaty bodies information on the steps taken to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including with the aim of implementing the provisions of the present resolution;

50. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to prepare, for submission to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session and to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-eighth session, reports on the implementation of the present resolution, and encourages him to pay specific attention to paragraphs 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 18, 19, 34 and 35 above, based on the views collected in accordance with the request of the Commission, as recalled in paragraph 48 above;

51. *Expresses its appreciation* to those Governments and non-governmental organizations that have provided information to the Special Rapporteur in the course of the preparation of his reports to the General Assembly;

52. *Stresses* that such information is important for the sharing of experiences and best practices in the fight against extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups, and other extremist ideological movements that incite racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

53. *Encourages* Governments and non-governmental organizations to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the exercise of the tasks outlined in paragraph 50 above;

54. *Encourages* Governments, non-governmental organizations and relevant actors to disseminate, as widely as possible, information regarding the contents of and the principles outlined in the present resolution, including through the media, but not limited to it;

55. *Decides* to remain seized of the issue.

73rd plenary meeting
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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/437)*]

72/157. A global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the comprehensive follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference,[1] and in this regard underlining the imperative need for their full and effective implementation,

Recalling also the suffering of the victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and the need to honour their memory,

Calling upon States to honour the memory of victims of the historical injustices of slavery, the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism and apartheid,

Stressing that the outcome of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance has the same status as the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions in the human rights and social fields, and that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action remains a solid basis and the only instructive outcome of the World Conference, which prescribes comprehensive measures for combating all the scourges of racism and adequate remedies for victims,

Underlining the need to promote tolerance and respect for diversity and the need to seek common ground among and within civilizations in order to address common challenges to humanity that threaten shared values, universal human rights and the

[1] See A/CONF.189/12 and A/CONF.189/12/Corr.1, chap. I.

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fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, through cooperation, partnership and inclusion,

Alarmed at the spread in many parts of the world of various racist extremist movements based on ideologies that seek to promote populist, nationalist, right-wing agendas and racial superiority, and stressing that these practices fuel racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,

Deploring the ongoing and resurgent scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in many regions of the world, particularly targeting migrants and refugees, as well as people of African descent, expressing concern that political leaders and parties have supported such an environment, and in this context expressing its support for migrants and refugees in the context of the severe discrimination that they may face,

Recalling the three Decades for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination previously declared by the General Assembly, and regretting that the Programmes of Action for those Decades were not fully implemented and that their objectives have yet to be attained,

Reiterating that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and have the potential to contribute constructively to the development and well-being of their societies, and that any doctrine of racial superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous and must be rejected, together with theories that attempt to determine the existence of separate human races,

Underlining the intensity, magnitude and organized nature of slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, and the associated historical injustices, as well as the untold suffering caused by colonialism and apartheid, and that Africans and people of African descent, Asians and people of Asian descent and indigenous peoples continue to be victims, and acknowledging that the ongoing effects must be remedied,

Acknowledging the efforts and initiatives undertaken by States to prohibit racial discrimination and racial segregation and to engender the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights,

Emphasizing that, despite efforts in this regard, millions of human beings continue to be victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including their contemporary forms and manifestations, some of which manifest in violent forms,

Welcoming the efforts made by civil society in support of the follow-up mechanisms in the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the appointment of the five independent eminent experts by the Secretary-General on 16 June 2003, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/266 of 27 March 2002, with the mandate to follow up on the implementation of the provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and to make appropriate recommendations thereon, and in this regard taking note with appreciation of the role played, and noting the role still to be played, by those independent eminent experts in mobilizing global political will for concrete action for the total elimination of all the scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,

Underlining the primacy of the political will, international cooperation and adequate funding at the national, regional and international levels needed to address all forms and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related

intolerance for the successful implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling its resolution 2142 (XXI) of 26 October 1966, in which it proclaimed 21 March as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,

Recalling also its resolution 62/122 of 17 December 2007, in which it designated 25 March as the annual International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade,

Recalling further, in the above context, the unveiling of the permanent memorial for the victims of slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, *The Ark of Return*, on 25 March 2015,

Welcoming the call upon all the former colonial Powers for reparations, consistent with paragraphs 157 and 158 of the Durban Programme of Action, to redress the historical injustices of slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade,

Recognizing and affirming that the global fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and all their abhorrent and contemporary forms and manifestations is a matter of priority for the international community,

I
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

1. *Reaffirms* the paramount importance of universal adherence to and the full and effective implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[2] adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 2106 A (XX) of 21 December 1965, in addressing the scourges of racism and racial discrimination;

2. *Calls upon* States that have not done so to accede to and/or ratify the Convention, and States parties to consider making the declaration under article 14 of the Convention, as well as to consider withdrawing reservations to article 4 of the Convention, as a matter of urgency, in view of the fact that the continued maintenance of reservations negates the essence of the instrument and defeats its objects and purposes;

3. *Underlines*, in the above context, that the provisions of the Convention do not respond effectively to contemporary manifestations of racial discrimination, in particular in relation to xenophobia and related intolerance, which is recognized as the rationale behind the convening of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001;

4. *Takes note* of the acknowledgement by the Human Rights Council and its subsidiary structures of the existence of both procedural and substantive gaps in the Convention, which must be filled as a matter of urgency, necessity and priority;

5. *Expresses its concern* at the lack of progress in the elaboration of complementary standards to the Convention to fill existing gaps through the development of new normative standards aimed at combating all forms of contemporary and resurgent scourges of racism;

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.

6. *Welcomes* Human Rights Council resolution 34/36 of 24 March 2017,[3] in which the Council requested the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination to ensure the commencement of the negotiations on the draft additional protocol to the Convention criminalizing acts of a racist and xenophobic nature during the tenth session of the Ad Hoc Committee;

7. *Requests* the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards to present a progress report to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session;

II
International Decade for People of African Descent

8. *Welcomes* the proclamation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, as contained in its resolution 68/237 of 23 December 2013, and the celebratory launch of the Decade on 10 December 2014;

9. *Recalls* its resolution 69/16 of 18 November 2014 on the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, in which it recommended the establishment of a forum on people of African descent and giving consideration to the elaboration of a draft United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect of human rights of people of African descent;

10. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent[4] and on a global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;[5]

11. *Also takes note* of the report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent,[6] invites the Human Rights Council, through the Chair of the Working Group, to continue to submit a report on the work of the Working Group to the General Assembly, and in this regard invites the Chair of the Working Group to engage in an interactive dialogue with the Assembly under the item entitled "Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" at its seventy-third session;

12. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to accelerate efforts and strengthen awareness-raising public information campaigns in support of the International Decade for People of African Descent through the use of social networks and digital media, including the wide distribution of user-friendly, concise and accessible versions of material in this regard;

III
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

13. *Welcomes* the inclusion of the historic and landmark World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance of 2001

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[3] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/72/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

[4] A/72/323.

[5] A/72/324.

[6] See A/72/319.

among the 20 major achievements of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights since the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action in 1993;[7]

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the Office of the High Commissioner to provide the resources necessary for the effective fulfilment of the mandates of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, the group of independent eminent experts on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards, and in this regard to ensure the participation of experts in each session of those follow-up mechanisms in order to provide advice on the specific issues under discussion and assist the mechanisms in their deliberations and the adoption of action-oriented recommendations in relation to the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action;

IV
Group of independent eminent experts on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

15. *Welcomes* the note by the Secretariat on the nomination of the candidates to fill the existing vacancies in the group of independent eminent experts to ensure the revitalization and reactivation of the operational activities of the group,[8] and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to appoint the members of the group by March 2018 in accordance with its resolution 56/266;

16. *Requests* the group of independent eminent experts to convene its fifth session during 2018 and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session;

V
Trust fund for the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination

17. *Recalls* the establishment by the Secretary-General, in 1973, of the trust fund for the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination as a funding mechanism that has been utilized for the implementation of the activities of the three Decades for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination declared by the General Assembly, and in this regard appreciates the fact that the trust fund has also been utilized for the subsequent programmes and operational activities transcending the three Decades;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include, in his report on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, a section outlining the progress in the implementation of paragraph 18 of its resolution 68/151 of 18 December 2013 regarding the revitalization of the trust fund for the purpose of ensuring the successful implementation of the activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent and enhancing the effectiveness of the comprehensive follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;[1]

19. *Strongly* appeals to all Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals, as well as other donors in a position to do so, to contribute generously to the trust fund, and to that end requests the

[7] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[8] A/72/285.

Secretary-General to continue to undertake appropriate contacts and initiatives to encourage contributions;

VI
Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

20. *Takes note* of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,[9] and encourages the Special Rapporteur, within his mandate, to continue to focus on the issues of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and incitement to hatred, which impede peaceful coexistence and harmony within societies, and to submit reports in this regard to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly;

21. *Reiterates* its previous requests to the Special Rapporteur to consider examining national models of mechanisms that measure racial equality and their added value in the eradication of racial discrimination and to report on such challenges, successes and best practices in his next report, and expresses concern at the lack of progress in this regard;

VII
Follow-up and implementation activities

22. *Requests* the Human Rights Council to consider, at its thirty-seventh session, the question of developing a multi-year programme of activities to provide for the renewed and strengthened outreach activities needed to inform and mobilize the global public in support of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and to strengthen awareness of the contribution that they have made in the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in consultation with Member States, national human rights institutions, relevant civil society organizations and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;

23. *Also requests* the Human Rights Council to continue to pay attention to the situation regarding racial equality in the world, and in this regard requests the Council, through its Advisory Committee, to prepare a study on appropriate ways and means of assessing the situation, while identifying possible gaps and overlaps;

24. *Welcomes* the commemorative plenary meeting of the General Assembly held on 21 March 2017 to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, on the theme "Racial profiling and incitement to hatred, including in the context of migration";

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

26. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Human Rights Council to continue to convene annual commemorative meetings of the Assembly and the Council during the commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, with the appropriate focus and themes, and to hold a debate on promoting tolerance, inclusion, unity and respect for diversity in the context of combating racial discrimination, with the participation of the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and in this context encourages the participation of eminent personalities active in the struggle against racial discrimination, Member States and civil society organizations in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Assembly and the Council, respectively;

[9] A/72/291.

27. *Decides* to remain seized of this priority matter at its seventy-third session under the item entitled "Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance".

73rd plenary meeting
19 December 2017

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/438)*]

72/158. Use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination

The General Assembly,

Recalling all of its previous resolutions on the subject, including resolution 71/182 of 19 December 2016, and Human Rights Council resolutions 15/12 of 30 September 2010,[1] 15/26 of 1 October 2010,[2] 18/4 of 29 September 2011,[3] 21/8 of 27 September 2012,[4] 24/13 of 26 September 2013,[5] 27/10 of 25 September 2014,[6] 30/6 of 1 October 2015,[7] 33/4 of 29 September 2016[8] and 36/3 of 28 September 2017[9] as well as all resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights in this regard,

Recalling also all of its relevant resolutions, in which, inter alia, it condemned any State that permitted or tolerated the recruitment, financing, training, assembly, transit or use of mercenaries with the objective of overthrowing the Governments of States Members of the United Nations, especially those of developing countries, or of fighting against national liberation movements, and recalling further the relevant resolutions and international instruments adopted by the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Organization of African

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/65/53/Add.1), chap. II.
[2] Ibid., chap. I.
[3] Ibid., *Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigendum (A/66/53/Add.1 and A/66/53/Add.1/Corr.1), chap. II.
[4] Ibid., *Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/67/53/Add.1), chap. III.
[5] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/68/53/Add.1), chap. III.
[6] Ibid., *Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigenda (A/69/53/Add.1, A/69/53/Add.1/Corr.1 and A/69/53/Add.1/Corr.2), chap. IV, sect. A.
[7] Ibid., *Seventieth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/70/53/Add.1), chap. III.
[8] Ibid., *Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigendum (A/71/53/Add.1 and A/71/53/Add.1/Corr.1), chap. II.
[9] Ibid., *Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/72/53/Add.1), chap. II.

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Unity, inter alia, the Organization of African Unity Convention for the elimination of mercenarism in Africa,[10] as well as by the African Union,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations concerning the strict observance of the principles of sovereign equality, political independence, the territorial integrity of States, the self-determination of peoples, the non-use of force or of the threat of use of force in international relations and non-interference in affairs within the domestic jurisdiction of States,

Reaffirming also that, by virtue of the principle of self-determination, all peoples have the right freely to determine their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development and that every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter,

Reaffirming further the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,[11]

Acknowledging with appreciation the work and contributions of the open-ended intergovernmental working group established by the Human Rights Council with the mandate of considering the possibility of elaborating an international regulatory framework, including the option of elaborating a legally binding instrument on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies,

Alarmed and concerned at the danger that the activities of mercenaries constitute to peace and security in developing countries in various parts of the world, in particular in areas of armed conflict, and about the threat they pose to the integrity of and respect for the constitutional order of the affected countries,

Deeply concerned at the loss of life, the substantial damage to property and the negative effects on the policies and economies of affected countries resulting from international criminal mercenary activities,

Convinced that, notwithstanding the way in which mercenaries or mercenary-related activities are used or the form that they take to acquire some semblance of legitimacy, they are a threat to peace, security and the self-determination of peoples and an obstacle to the enjoyment of all human rights by peoples,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the latest report of the Working Group of the Human Rights Council on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination;[12]

2. *Reaffirms* that the use of mercenaries and their recruitment, financing, protection and training are causes for grave concern to all States and that they violate the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

3. *Recognizes* that armed conflict, terrorism, arms trafficking and covert operations by third Powers encourage, inter alia, the demand for mercenaries on the global market;

4. *Urges*, once again, all States to take the steps necessary and to exercise the utmost vigilance against the menace posed by the activities of mercenaries and to take legislative measures to ensure that their territories and other territories under their control are not used for, and that their nationals do not take part in, the recruitment, assembly, financing, training, protection or transit of mercenaries for the planning of

[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1490, No. 25573.

[11] Resolution 2625 (XXV), annex.

[12] A/72/286.

activities designed to impede the right of peoples to self-determination, to destabilize or overthrow the Government of any State or to dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in accordance with the right of peoples to self-determination;

5. *Requests* all States to exercise the utmost vigilance against any kind of recruitment, training, hiring or financing of mercenaries by private companies offering international military consultancy and security services, and to impose a specific ban on such companies intervening in armed conflicts or actions to destabilize constitutional regimes;

6. *Encourages* States that import military assistance or consultancy and security services provided by private companies to establish national regulatory mechanisms for registering and licensing those companies in order to ensure that the imported services provided by those private companies neither impede the enjoyment of human rights nor violate human rights in the recipient country;

7. *Emphasizes its utmost concern* about the impact of the activities of private military and security companies on the enjoyment of human rights, in particular when operating in armed conflicts, and notes that private military and security companies and their personnel are rarely held accountable for violations of human rights;

8. *Calls upon* all States that have not yet done so to consider taking the action necessary to accede to or ratify the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries;[11]

9. *Welcomes* the cooperation extended by those countries that received a visit by the Working Group on the use of mercenaries and the adoption by some States of national legislation that restricts the recruitment, assembly, financing, training and transit of mercenaries;

10. *Condemns* recent mercenary activities in developing countries in various parts of the world, in particular in areas of conflict, and the threat they pose to the integrity of and respect for the constitutional order of those countries and the exercise of the right of their peoples to self-determination, and stresses the importance for the Working Group on the use of mercenaries of looking into sources and root causes, as well as the political motivations of mercenaries and for mercenary-related activities;

11. *Calls upon* States to investigate the possibility of mercenary involvement whenever and wherever criminal acts of a terrorist nature occur and to bring to trial those found responsible or to consider their extradition, if so requested, in accordance with national law and applicable bilateral or international treaties;

12. *Condemns* any form of impunity granted to perpetrators of mercenary activities and to those responsible for the use, recruitment, financing and training of mercenaries, and urges all States, in accordance with their obligations under international law, to bring them, without distinction, to justice;

13. *Calls upon* Member States, in accordance with their obligations under international law, to cooperate with and assist the judicial prosecution of those accused of mercenary activities in transparent, open and fair trials;

14. *Recalls* the holding of the sixth session of the open-ended intergovernmental working group to consider the possibility of elaborating an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies, expresses satisfaction at the participation of experts, including the members of the Working Group on the use of mercenaries, as resource persons at the above-mentioned session, and requests the

[11] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2163, No. 37789.

Working Group and other experts to continue their participation in the above-mentioned working group;

15. *Requests* the Working Group on the use of mercenaries to continue the work already done by the Special Rapporteurs on the use of mercenaries of the Commission on Human Rights with respect to the strengthening of the international legal framework for the prevention and sanction of the recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries, taking into account the proposal for a new legal definition of a mercenary drafted by the Special Rapporteur in his report to the Commission on Human Rights at its sixtieth session;[14]

16. *Also requests* the Working Group on the use of mercenaries to continue to study and identify sources and causes, emerging issues, manifestations and trends regarding mercenaries or mercenary-related activities and private military and security companies and their impact on human rights, particularly on the right of peoples to self-determination;

17. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as a matter of priority, to publicize the adverse effects of the activities of mercenaries on the right of peoples to self-determination and, when requested and where necessary, to render advisory services to States that are affected by those activities;

18. *Recommends* that all Member States, including those confronted with the [illegible] of private military and security companies, as contracting States, States of operations, home States or States whose nationals are employed to work for a private military and security company, contribute to the work of the open-ended intergovernmental working group, taking into account the initial work done by the Working Group on the use of mercenaries;

19. *Urges* all States to cooperate fully with the Working Group on the use of mercenaries in the fulfilment of its mandate;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to provide the Working Group on the use of mercenaries with all the assistance and support necessary for the fulfilment of its mandate, both professional and financial, including through the promotion of cooperation between the Working Group and other components of the United Nations system that deal with mercenary-related activities, in order to meet the demands of its current and future activities;

21. *Requests* the Working Group on the use of mercenaries to consult States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on the implementation of the present resolution, and to report, with specific recommendations, to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session its findings on the use of mercenaries to undermine the enjoyment of all human rights and to impede the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination;

22. *Decides* to consider the question of the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination at its seventy-third session under the item entitled "Right of peoples to self-determination".

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[14] See E/CN.4/2004/15, para. 47.

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[on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/438)]

72/159. Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the importance, for the effective guarantee and observance of human rights, of the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and embodied in the International Covenants on Human Rights,[1] as well as in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960,

Welcoming the progressive exercise of the right to self-determination by peoples under colonial, foreign or alien occupation and their emergence into sovereign statehood and independence,

Deeply concerned at the continuation of acts or threats of foreign military intervention and occupation that are threatening to suppress, or have already suppressed, the right to self-determination of peoples and nations,

Expressing grave concern that, as a consequence of the persistence of such actions, millions of people have been or are being uprooted from their homes as refugees and displaced persons, and emphasizing the urgent need for concerted international action to alleviate their condition,

Recalling the relevant resolutions regarding the violation of the right of peoples to self-determination and other human rights as a result of foreign military intervention, aggression and occupation adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its sixty-first[2] and previous sessions,

[1] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[2] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/2005/23, E/2005/23/Corr.1 and E/2005/23/Corr.2), chap. II, sect. A.

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Reaffirming its previous resolutions on the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, including resolution 71/183 of 19 December 2016,

Reaffirming also its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, containing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and recalling its resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005, containing the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which, inter alia, upheld the right to self-determination of peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the right of peoples to self-determination,[1]

1. *Reaffirms* that the universal realization of the right of all peoples, including those under colonial, foreign and alien domination, to self-determination is a fundamental condition for the effective guarantee and observance of human rights and for the preservation and promotion of such rights;

2. *Declares its firm opposition* to acts of foreign military intervention, aggression and occupation, since these have resulted in the suppression of the right of peoples to self-determination and other human rights in certain parts of the world;

3. *Calls upon* those States responsible to cease immediately their military intervention in and occupation of foreign countries and territories and all acts of repression, discrimination, exploitation and maltreatment, in particular the brutal and inhuman methods reportedly employed in the execution of those acts against the peoples concerned;

4. *Deplores* the plight of millions of refugees and displaced persons who have been uprooted as a result of the aforementioned acts, and reaffirms their right to return to their homes voluntarily in safety and with honour;

5. *Requests* the Human Rights Council to continue to give special attention to violations of human rights, especially the right to self-determination, resulting from foreign military intervention, aggression or occupation;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on this question to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session under the item entitled "Right of peoples to self-determination".

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[1] A/72/317.

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[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/438)*]

72/160. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination

The General Assembly,

Aware that the development of friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, is among the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as defined in the Charter,

Recalling, in this regard, its resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970, entitled "Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations",

Bearing in mind the International Covenants on Human Rights,[1] the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples[3] and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[4]

Recalling the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,[5]

Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[6]

Recalling further the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,[7] and noting in particular the reply of the Court, including on the right of peoples to self-determination, which is a right *erga omnes*,[8]

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[1] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[2] Resolution 217 A (III).
[3] Resolution 1514 (XV).
[4] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[5] Resolution 50/6.
[6] Resolution 55/2.
[7] See A/ES-10/273 and A/ES-10/273/Corr.1.
[8] Ibid., advisory opinion, para. 88.

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Recalling the conclusion of the Court, in its advisory opinion of 9 July 2004, that the construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, along with measures previously taken, severely impedes the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination,[9]

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, based on the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative[10] and the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,[11]

Stressing also the need for respect for and preservation of the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalling in this regard its resolution 58/292 of 6 May 2004,

Recalling its resolution 71/184 of 19 December 2016,

Recalling also its resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012,

Affirming the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders,

1. *Reaffirms* the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine;

2. *Urges* all States and the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in the early realization of their right to self-determination.

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[9] Ibid., para. 122.

[10] A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

[11] S/2003/529, annex.

United Nations A/RES/72/161

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Seventy-second session
Agenda item 72

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/439)*]

72/161. International Day of Sign Languages

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that multilingualism, as a core value of the Organization, contributes to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations, as set out in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recognizing also that the United Nations pursues multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally, as well as of improving the efficiency, performance and transparency of the Organization,

Reaffirming its resolutions 53/199 of 15 December 1998 and 61/185 of 20 December 2006 on the proclamation of international years and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries, particularly paragraphs 1 to 10 of the annex thereto on the agreed criteria for the proclamation of international years, and paragraphs 13 and 14, in which it is stated that an international day or year should not be proclaimed before the basic arrangements for its organization and financing have been made,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[1]

Recalling also the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[2] in which it is reflected that sign languages are equal to spoken languages, and that States parties to the Convention undertake to recognize, accept and promote the use of sign languages,

Recalling further its resolutions 2 (I) of 1 February 1946, 2480 B (XXIII) of 21 December 1968, 42/207 C of 11 December 1987, 47/135 of 18 December 1992 and 50/11 of 2 November 1995 and other subsequent resolutions relating to multilingualism, including resolutions 67/292 of 24 July 2013, 68/307 of

[1] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.

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10 September 2014, 69/96 A and B of 5 December 2014, 69/250 of 29 December 2014, 69/324 of 11 September 2015, 71/101 A and B of 6 December 2016, 71/262 and 71/263 of 23 December 2016, 71/288 of 24 May 2017, 71/314 of 19 July 2017 and 71/328 of 11 September 2017,

Affirming that ensuring and promoting the full realization of all human rights relevant to matters of language and fundamental freedoms is a critical prerequisite to the full realization of human rights for deaf people,

Aware that sign languages are fully fledged natural languages, structurally distinct from spoken languages, alongside which they coexist, and that, when working with deaf communities, the principle of "nothing about us without us" must be considered and integrated,

Recalling that early access to sign language and services in sign language, including quality education available in sign language, is vital to the growth and development of the deaf individual and critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals,

Recognizing the importance of preserving sign languages as part of linguistic and cultural diversity,

1. *Proclaims* 23 September as the International Day of Sign Languages, to be observed each year beginning in 2018, in order to raise awareness of the importance of sign language in the full realization of the human rights of people who are deaf;

2. *Invites* all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other international organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to observe the International Day of Sign Languages in an appropriate manner, in order to raise public awareness of sign languages;

3. *Encourages* Member States to take measures to raise awareness of sign languages throughout society;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States and organizations of the United Nations system;

5. *Stresses* that the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution regarding the International Day of Sign Languages should be met from voluntary contributions.

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19 December 2017

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General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/439/Add.1)]

72/162. Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous relevant resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 70/145 of 17 December 2015, as well as relevant resolutions of the Human Rights Council and of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions,

Recalling also the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed the full enjoyment of their rights and freedoms without discrimination,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[2] and the Optional Protocol thereto,[3] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[4] the Convention on the Rights of the Child[5] and all other relevant international human rights instruments,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,[6] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[7] the Beijing

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.
[3] Ibid., vol. 2518, No. 44910.
[4] Ibid., vol. 1249, No. 20378.
[5] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[6] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[7] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

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Declaration[7] and Platform for Action[8] and the outcome documents of their review conferences,

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[10] which is inclusive of persons with disabilities and in which Member States pledged to leave no one behind, and acknowledging that Member States, while implementing the 2030 Agenda, should, inter alia, respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without discrimination of any kind,

Welcoming also the inclusion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls as a stand-alone goal and in the implementation of all goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the recognition that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to making progress across all the Sustainable Development Goals and targets which contribute to the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities,

Welcoming further the fact that, since the opening for signature of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto on 30 March 2007, 160 States have signed and 174 States and 1 regional integration organization have ratified or acceded to the Convention and 92 States have signed and 92 States have ratified the Optional Protocol,

Noting with appreciation the work and activities that have been and continue to be undertaken in support of the Convention and towards the fulfilment and mainstreaming of the rights of all persons with disabilities, particularly through, inter alia, the Conference of States Parties to the Convention, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, other human rights treaty bodies, the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons with disabilities, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility, the Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action,

Expressing concern that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, which limit their enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others, particularly with regard to the equal access of persons with disabilities to education and employment, access to health-care services, including for sexual and reproductive health, access to justice and equal recognition before the law, the ability to participate in political and public life, live independently and be included in the community and have the freedom to make their own choices,

Expressing concern also that structural or systemic discrimination is reflected in hidden or overt patterns of discriminatory institutional behaviour, discriminatory cultural traditions, discriminatory and negative social norms and attitudes and unequal power relations that view women and girls, in particular women and girls with disabilities, as subordinate to men and boys, and underscoring that States should take all appropriate measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women,

Expressing concern further that stereotypes, stigmatization and discrimination heighten the risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, including sexual violence and abuse, against women and girls with disabilities compared to women and girls without disabilities, as well as men and boys with disabilities,

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[7] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[8] Ibid., annex II.

[10] Resolution 70/1.

Expressing concern about the low labour force participation rate of women with disabilities, who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and encounter structural, physical, communicational and attitudinal barriers hindering their access to and participation in the workplace on an equal basis with others,

Recognizing the contribution of family members towards ensuring the full enjoyment by women and girls with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others,

Concerned that the continuing lack of reliable statistics, data and information on the situation of persons with disabilities at the national, regional and global levels contributes to their exclusion in official statistics, policies and programmes, and in this regard recognizing the need to intensify efforts to build the capacity of Member States, and to strengthen data collection and analysis and disaggregate data by disability, sex and age to support the development of evidence-based policies and programmes inclusive of women and girls with disabilities,

Recognizing the need for States to accelerate the development, implementation and mainstreaming of strategies that respect, protect and fulfil the rights of all persons with disabilities, including women and girls, to the enjoyment of civil, political, economic, cultural and social rights without discrimination by adopting legislation, policies and programmes that are inclusive of all women and girls with disabilities, and affirming that realizing their human rights requires their full, effective and meaningful participation and inclusion in all aspects of public, political, economic, cultural, social and family life, on an equal basis with all others,

Recognizing also that information and communications technologies have shown their potential to strengthen the exercise of human rights, and that they can create conditions enabling women and girls with disabilities to fully enjoy their human rights and can also contribute to their empowerment,

Stressing the importance of closely consulting and actively involving persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls, through their representative organizations in the development and implementation of legislation and policies that impact their lives and in other decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities,

Acknowledging the importance of taking measures to raise awareness of the rights of women and girls with disabilities in order to eliminate stereotypes, prejudices and violence, including harmful practices which seriously violate and impair or nullify the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls with disabilities and which constitute a major impediment to their full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy and political decision-making,

1. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to consider signing and ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[2] and the Optional Protocol thereto[3] as a matter of priority;

2. *Encourages* States that have ratified the Convention and submitted one or more reservations to it to review regularly the effect and continued relevance of such reservations and to consider the possibility of withdrawing them;

3. *Requests* United Nations agencies and organizations, and invites intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to continue to strengthen efforts undertaken to disseminate accessible and easy-to-understand information on the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto, including to children and young people to promote their understanding, and to assist States parties in implementing their obligations under those instruments;

4. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of women and girls with disabilities and the status of the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto[11] and the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons with disabilities;[12]

5. *Emphasizes* the importance of mainstreaming disability issues as an integral part of relevant sustainable development strategies, and encourages States to apply a human rights-based approach and to intensify their efforts to advance the rights of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[10] consistent with their international obligations;

6. *Urges* States to take steps to eliminate multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women and girls with disabilities through repealing discriminatory laws, policies and practices and to take all effective measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all rights stipulated in the Convention;

7. *Calls upon* States to adopt effective measures to provide women and girls with disabilities access to the support they may require to exercise their legal capacity to have the freedom to make their own choices on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life;

8. *Also calls upon* States to strengthen efforts to empower women and girls with disabilities and enhance their participation and promote leadership in society through taking measures to address all barriers that prevent or restrict the full and equal participation of women and girls with disabilities, including in the government and public sector, the private sector, civil society and all branches and bodies of the national monitoring system of the Convention, and working to ensure that women and girls with disabilities are closely consulted and actively involved, through their representative organizations, in the design, implementation and monitoring of all legislation, policies and programmes which have an impact on their lives;

9. *Encourages* States to review and repeal any law or policy that restricts persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, from their effective and full participation in political and public life on an equal basis with others, including forming and joining organizations and networks of women in general and of women with disabilities;

10. *Also encourages* States to provide support to existing organizations and promote the creation of organizations, including civil society organizations, and networks of women and girls with disabilities, and to promote and support women with disabilities in taking leadership roles in public decision-making bodies at all levels, recognizing the importance for States of having an open, inclusive and transparent engagement with civil society in the implementation of measures on women and girls with disabilities;

11. *Calls upon* States to strengthen and intensify efforts to take deliberate, concrete and targeted steps to fully realize the equal enjoyment of the right to education, including ensuring access to an inclusive education system at all levels for all women and girls with disabilities, eliminating legal, administrative, financial, structural, social and cultural barriers that hinder their equal enjoyment of the right to education on an equal basis with others, and to facilitate their full and equal participation in education by taking appropriate steps through the provision of information in accessible and alternative communication formats, reasonable accommodation and other support as required;

[11] A/72/227.

[12] A/72/133.

12. *Also calls upon* States to develop policies and measures that promote access to education for persons with disabilities and to strengthen education systems that are fully inclusive of girls with disabilities to reduce the risk of social exclusion and poverty, which could have long-term implications for their capacity and opportunity to participate in labour markets;

13. *Further calls upon* States to implement effective measures to protect the right of women with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others in the public and private sectors, to ensure that labour markets and work environments are open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities, and in this regard to take positive measures to increase the employment opportunities of women with disabilities and eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including recruitment, retention and promotion, and the provision of accessible, safe, secure and healthy working conditions, in consultation with relevant national mechanisms and organizations of persons with disabilities;

14. *Calls upon* States to take effective action to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse, including sexual violence and abuse, against women and girls with disabilities without delay, including by:

(a) Adopting, strengthening and implementing legislation on violence against women to ensure that it expressly prohibits violence and provides adequate protection for women and girls with disabilities against all forms of violence, including violence perpetrated by support providers, health-care providers and others in positions of authority, as well as domestic violence, including intimate partner violence, and ends impunity and adequately penalizes offences involving physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence occurring in families, in institutions and carried out by support providers;

(b) Taking all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of gender and/or impairment by any person, organization or private enterprise, ensuring access to justice and accountability mechanisms and remedies for the effective implementation and enforcement of laws aimed at preventing and eliminating discrimination and violence against women and girls with disabilities, taking into account the multiple, intersecting and aggravating forms of discrimination, and protecting victims and witnesses from violence while investigating, prosecuting and punishing those responsible, including private actors, and providing access to redress and reparations where human rights violations or abuses occur;

(c) Ensuring that services and programmes designed to protect women and girls from violence are accessible to women and girls with disabilities, in particular those living in institutionalized settings, who are the most vulnerable to violence, including by ensuring that facilities are accessible and mainstreaming disability in materials and training courses addressed at professionals working on violence against women;

(d) Ensuring that women and girls with disabilities and their families have access to a range of support services, information in accessible formats and education on how to prevent, recognize and report instances of exploitation, violence and abuse against women and girls with disabilities, as well as how to ensure that children with disabilities have a safe and supportive family environment;

15. *Also calls upon* States to accelerate efforts to eliminate harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and to repeal legislation and regulatory provisions that allow the administration of forced medical procedures such as forced sterilization, forced abortion and forced contraception and

to ensure that any medical procedure or intervention is not performed prior to the free and informed consent of women and girls with disabilities;

16. *Urges* States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters, to address violence against women and girls, providing timely and appropriate reintegration and rehabilitation assistance to persons with disabilities while ensuring that their specific needs are addressed, such as access to health-care services, psychosocial support and educational programmes;

17. *Calls upon* States to realize the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health, for women and girls with disabilities on an equal basis with all others, in particular by providing access to inclusive and accessible disability-, gender- and age-appropriate information, support and reasonable accommodation so that they can access quality and affordable and universally designed health facilities, and urges Governments to promote and protect the human rights of all women and girls, including the right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, and to adopt and accelerate the implementation of laws, policies and programmes that protect and enable their enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including reproductive rights, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[7] the Beijing Platform for Action[9] and the outcome documents of their review conferences, on an equal basis with others;

18. *Also calls upon* States to accelerate efforts to scale up scientifically accurate age-appropriate comprehensive education that provides adolescent girls and young women with disabilities, in and out of school, in a manner consistent with their evolving capacities, with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, with information in accessible and alternative communication formats on sexual and reproductive health, gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, physical, psychological and pubertal development and power in relationships between women and men, to enable them to build self-esteem and informed decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills and develop respectful relationships, in full partnership with young people, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, educators and health-care providers;

19. *Further calls upon* States to collect and analyse data disaggregated by income, sex, race, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant to national contexts to assist with the identification and eradication of barriers and all forms of discrimination, especially multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, that prevent women and girls with disabilities from enjoying all the rights stipulated in the Convention, and to guide policy planning and improve data collection systems for adequate monitoring and evaluation frameworks on the implementation of the Convention and the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to women and girls with disabilities;

20. *Urges* States and other relevant stakeholders, including national human rights institutions, to continue to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by, inter alia, supporting the disaggregation of data by disability, sex and age for specific indicators, on the basis of the Washington Group short set of questions on disability and other data collection methodologies, where relevant, to assist States in measuring the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 associated targets and programming policies in the context of the Goals;

21. *Encourages* States, United Nations entities and relevant international organizations, inter alia:

(a) To ensure that international cooperation is disability- and gender-sensitive and inclusive, including through the implementation of disability markers to monitor the implementation of programmes, and the collection of data and statistics on persons with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators, as well as other international frameworks;

(b) To support and promote international cooperation and assistance and enhance partnerships and coordination, including South-South cooperation, among themselves and the active participation of civil society organizations, including women's organizations and organizations of women and girls with disabilities and other key stakeholders in strengthening means of implementation, including mobilization of financial resources and technical cooperation for the implementation of the Convention and the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development focusing on women and girls with disabilities;

22. *Invites* the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities to address and engage in an interactive dialogue with the General Assembly annually, under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of human rights", as a way to enhance communication between the Assembly and the Committee;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session a report on the rights of persons with disabilities with a focus on the issue of accessibility and the challenges to the implementation of the Convention in that regard, in consultation with relevant United Nations agencies, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Children's Fund, taking into account the views of relevant stakeholders and using existing available materials, and to include a segment on the status of the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto;

24. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that the Office of the High Commissioner has adequate resources for the fulfilment of its tasks with respect to its work on the rights of persons with disabilities.

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72/163. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its previous resolutions on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,

Reaffirming also that no one shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,

Recalling that freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is a non-derogable right under international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, which must be respected and protected under all circumstances, including in times of international or internal armed conflict or disturbance or any other public emergency, that the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is affirmed in relevant international instruments and that legal and procedural safeguards against such acts must not be subject to measures that would circumvent this right,

Recalling also that the prohibition of torture is a peremptory norm of international law without territorial limitation and that international, regional and domestic courts have recognized the prohibition of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as customary international law,

Recalling further the definition of torture contained in article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[1] and the obligation of States to abide strictly by the definition of torture contained in article 1, without prejudice to any international instrument or national legislation which contains or may contain provisions of wider application, and emphasizing the importance of properly interpreting and implementing the

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1465, No. 24841.

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obligations of States with respect to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,

Recognizing that States must protect the rights of those facing criminal sentences, including the death penalty and life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, and of other affected persons in accordance with their international obligations,

Noting that, under the Geneva Conventions of 1949,[2] torture and inhuman treatment are a grave breach and that, under the statute of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, the statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,[3] acts of torture can constitute crimes against humanity and, when committed in a situation of armed conflict, constitute war crimes,

Recognizing the importance of the implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,[4] which makes a significant contribution to the prevention and prohibition of torture, including by prohibiting secret places of detention and by ensuring legal and procedural safeguards for persons deprived of their liberty, and encouraging all States that have not done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Convention,

Taking note of the launching of the Alliance for Torture-Free Trade,

Commending the persistent efforts of civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and national preventive mechanisms, and the considerable network of centres for the rehabilitation of victims of torture, to prevent and combat torture and to alleviate the suffering of victims of torture,

Deeply concerned about all acts which can amount to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment committed against persons exercising their rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression in all regions of the world,

1. *Condemns* all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including through intimidation, which are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever and can thus never be justified, and calls upon all States to implement fully the absolute and non-derogable prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

2. *Also condemns* any action or attempt by States or public officials to legalize, authorize or acquiesce in torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment under any circumstances, including on grounds of national security and counter-terrorism or through judicial decisions, and urges States to ensure the accountability of those responsible for all such acts;

3. *Stresses* that States must neither punish personnel for not obeying orders to commit or conceal acts amounting to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading

[2] Ibid., vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.
[3] Ibid., vol. 2187, No. 38544.
[4] Ibid., vol. 2716, No. 48088.

treatment or punishment nor allow pleas of *respondeat superior* as a criminal defence in cases in which such orders were obeyed;

4. *Emphasizes* that acts of torture or inhuman treatment are grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949,[2] that acts of torture and cruel treatment in armed conflict are serious violations of international humanitarian law and in this regard constitute war crimes, that acts of torture can constitute crimes against humanity and that the perpetrators of all acts of torture must be prosecuted and punished, and in this regard notes the efforts of the International Criminal Court to end impunity by seeking to ensure accountability and punishment of perpetrators of such acts, in accordance with the Rome Statute,[3] bearing in mind its principle of complementarity, and encourages States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to the Rome Statute;

5. *Also emphasizes* that States must take persistent, determined and effective measures to prevent and combat all acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, stresses that all acts of torture must be made offences under national criminal law punishable by appropriate penalties that take into account their grave nature, and calls upon States to prohibit under national law acts constituting cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

6. *Stresses* that States must ensure that no statement that is established to have been made as a result of torture is invoked as evidence in any proceedings, except against a person accused of torture as evidence that the statement was made, urges States to extend that prohibition to statements made as a result of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and recognizes that adequate corroboration of statements, including confessions, used as evidence in any proceedings constitutes one safeguard for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

7. *Urges* States not to expel, return ("refouler"), extradite or in any other way transfer a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that the person would be in danger of being subjected to torture, stresses the importance of effective legal and procedural safeguards in this regard, and recognizes that diplomatic assurances, where given, do not release States from their obligations under international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law, in particular the principle of non-refoulement;

8. *Recalls* that, for the purpose of determining whether there are such grounds, the competent authorities shall take into account all relevant considerations, including, where applicable, the existence in the State concerned of a consistent pattern of gross, flagrant or mass violations of human rights;

9. *Urges* States to ensure that border control operations and reception centres fully comply with international human rights obligations and commitments, including the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

10. *Calls upon* all States to adopt and implement effective measures to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, in particular in the context of the use of force by law enforcement officials and in places of detention and other places where persons are deprived of their liberty, including legal and procedural safeguards, as well as to ensure that the competent judicial or disciplinary authorities and, where relevant, the prosecution can effectively ensure compliance with such safeguards;

11. *Recalls* its resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988 on the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, and in this context stresses that ensuring that any individual arrested

or detained is promptly brought before a judge or other independent judicial officer in person, and permitting prompt and regular medical care and legal counsel throughout all stages of detention, as well as visits by family members and independent monitoring mechanisms, are effective measures for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

12. *Stresses* the obligation of States to ensure that anyone who is arrested is informed at the time of arrest of the reasons for the arrest and is promptly informed of any charges against him or her, in accessible forms of communication, including in a language that he or she understands, and is provided with information about, and an explanation of, his or her rights;

13. *Calls upon* States to include education and information regarding the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in the training of law enforcement personnel and other personnel authorized to resort to force or who may be involved in the custody, interrogation or treatment of any individual subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment, which may include training on the use of force, all available modern scientific methods for the investigation of crimes and the critical importance of reporting instances of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment to superior authorities;

14. *Emphasizes* that States shall keep under systematic review interrogation rules, instructions, methods and practices, as well as arrangements for the custody and treatment of persons subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment in any territory under their jurisdiction, and stresses the importance of the development of domestic guidelines on the conduct of interrogations, with a view to preventing any cases of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

15. *Encourages* all States to take appropriate effective legislative, administrative, judicial and other measures to apply the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules);[5]

16. *Reminds* all States that prolonged incommunicado detention or detention in secret places can facilitate the perpetration of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and can in itself constitute a form of such treatment, and urges all States to respect the safeguards concerning the liberty, security and dignity of the person and to ensure that prolonged incommunicado detention and secret places of detention and interrogation are abolished;

17. *Emphasizes* that conditions of detention must respect the dignity and human rights of persons deprived of their liberty, highlights the importance of reflecting on this in efforts to promote respect for and protection of the rights of persons deprived of their liberty, calls upon States to address and prevent detention conditions amounting to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, notes in this regard concerns about solitary confinement, and encourages States to take effective measures to address overcrowding in detention facilities, which may have an impact on the dignity and human rights of persons deprived of their liberty;

18. *Welcomes* the establishment of national preventive mechanisms to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, urges States to consider establishing, appointing, maintaining or enhancing independent and effective mechanisms that have experts with the required capabilities and professional knowledge to undertake monitoring visits to places of detention, inter alia, with a

[5] Resolution 70/175, annex.

view to preventing acts of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and calls upon States parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[6] to fulfil their obligation to designate or establish national preventive mechanisms that are truly independent, properly resourced and effective;

19. *Calls upon* all States to take appropriate effective legislative, administrative, judicial and other measures to prevent and prohibit the production, trade, export, import and use of equipment that has no practical use other than for the purpose of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

20. *Urges* States, as an important element in preventing and combating torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, to ensure that no authority or official orders, applies, permits or tolerates any sanction, reprisal, intimidation or other prejudice against any person, group or association, including persons deprived of their liberty, for contacting, seeking to contact or having been in contact with any national or international monitoring or preventive body active in the prevention and combating of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

21. *Also urges* States to ensure accountability for any act of sanction, reprisal, intimidation or other form of unlawful prejudicial conduct against any person, group or association, including persons deprived of their liberty, for cooperating, seeking to cooperate or having cooperated with any national or international monitoring or preventive body active in the prevention and combating of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, by ensuring impartial, prompt, independent and thorough investigations of any alleged act of sanction, reprisal, intimidation or other form of unlawful prejudicial conduct; to bring the perpetrators to justice; to provide access to effective remedies for victims, in accordance with their international human rights obligations and commitments; and to prevent any recurrence;

22. *Calls upon* States parties to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[1] to fulfil their obligation to submit for prosecution or extradite those alleged to have committed acts of torture, regardless of where such acts were committed, if the alleged offender is present in any territory under their jurisdiction, and encourages other States also to do so, bearing in mind the need to fight impunity;

23. *Encourages* States to consider establishing or maintaining appropriate national processes to record allegations of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and to ensure that such information is accessible in accordance with applicable law;

24. *Stresses* that an independent, competent domestic authority must promptly, effectively and impartially investigate all allegations of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as well as wherever there is reasonable ground to believe that such an act has been committed, and that those who encourage, instigate, order, tolerate, acquiesce in, consent to or perpetrate such acts must be held responsible, brought to justice and punished in a manner commensurate with the severity of the offence, including the officials in charge of any place of detention or other place where persons are deprived of their liberty where the prohibited act is found to have been committed;

25. *Recalls*, in this respect, the Principles on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2375, No. 24841.

Punishment (the Istanbul Principles)[7] as a valuable tool in efforts to prevent and combat torture and the updated set of principles for the protection and promotion of human rights through action to combat impunity,[8]

26. *Emphasizes* that it is important for law enforcement officials to be able to play their role in safeguarding the right not to be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and for States to ensure the proper functioning of the criminal justice system, in particular by taking effective measures to combat corruption, establish proper legal aid programmes and provide for the adequate selection, training and remuneration of law enforcement officials;

27. *Encourages* all States to ensure that persons charged with torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment have no involvement in the custody, interrogation or treatment of any person under arrest, detention, imprisonment or other deprivation of liberty while such charges are pending and, if such persons are convicted, after the conviction;

28. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a victim-oriented approach[9] in the fight against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, paying special attention to the views and needs of victims in policy development and other activities relating to rehabilitation, prevention and accountability for torture;

29. *Also calls upon* all States to adopt a gender-sensitive approach in the fight against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, paying special attention to gender-based violence;

30. *Calls upon* States to ensure that the rights of persons who are marginalized and most vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, bearing in mind the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[10] are fully integrated into torture prevention and protection, and welcomes the efforts of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in this regard;

31. *Stresses* that national legal systems must ensure that victims of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment have effective access to justice and obtain redress, and that the complainants and witnesses are protected against all ill-treatment or intimidation as a consequence of making a complaint or giving evidence;

32. *Calls upon* States to provide redress for victims of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, encompassing effective remedy and adequate, effective and prompt reparation, which should include restitution, fair and adequate compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition, taking into full account the specific needs of the victim;

33. *Urges* States to ensure that appropriate rehabilitation services are promptly available to all victims without discrimination of any kind and without limitation in time, until the fullest rehabilitation possible has been achieved, and are provided either directly by the public health system or through the funding of private rehabilitation facilities, including those administered by civil society organizations, and to consider making rehabilitation services available to the immediate families or dependants of the victims and to persons who have suffered harm while intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization;

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[7] Resolution 55/89, annex.

[8] E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1.

[9] See A/HRC/16/52.

[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.

34. *Also urges* States to establish, maintain, facilitate or support rehabilitation centres or facilities where victims can receive such treatment and where effective measures for ensuring the safety of their staff and patients are taken;

35. *Urges* all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention against Torture and to give early consideration to signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol thereto as a matter of priority;

36. *Urges* all States parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to make the declarations provided for in articles 21 and 22 of the Convention concerning inter-State and individual communications, to consider the possibility of withdrawing their reservations to article 20, to notify the Secretary-General of their acceptance of the amendments to articles 17 and 18, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee against Torture as soon as possible, and to comply strictly with their obligations under the Convention, including, in view of the high number of reports not submitted in time, their obligation to submit reports in accordance with article 19 of the Convention, and invites States parties to incorporate a gender perspective and information concerning persons who are marginalized and most vulnerable, including children and juveniles and persons with disabilities, when submitting reports to the Committee;

37. *Welcomes* the work and the reports of the Committee and of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, recommends that their reports continue to include information on the follow-up by States parties to their recommendations, and supports the Committee and the Subcommittee in their efforts to further improve the effectiveness of their working methods;

38. *Calls upon* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in conformity with his mandate established by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, to continue to provide, at the request of States, advisory services for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including for the preparation of national reports to the Committee and for the establishment and operation of national preventive mechanisms, as well as technical assistance for the development, production and distribution of teaching materials for this purpose, and to provide the support necessary to enable the Subcommittee to provide advice and assistance to States parties to the Optional Protocol;

39. *Emphasizes* the importance of States ensuring proper follow-up to the recommendations and conclusions of the relevant treaty bodies and mechanisms, including the Committee, the Subcommittee, national preventive mechanisms and the Special Rapporteur, while recognizing the important role of the universal periodic review, national human rights institutions and other relevant national or regional bodies in preventing torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

40. *Takes note with appreciation* of the interim report of the Special Rapporteur on the legal, ethical, scientific and practical arguments against the use of torture, other ill-treatment and coercive methods during interviews of suspects, victims, witnesses and other persons in various investigative contexts[11] and his report on whether and in which circumstances the extra-custodial use of force by State agents amounts to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and how the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment applies to the development, acquisition, trade and use of weapons in law enforcement,[12] encourages him to continue to include, in his

[11] A/71/298.
[12] A/72/178.

recommendations, proposals on the prevention and investigation of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including its gender-based manifestations, requests him to continue to consider including in his reports information on the follow-up by States to his recommendations, visits and communications, including progress made and problems encountered, and on other official contacts, and further encourages future collaboration between practitioners, experts and other relevant stakeholders towards these goals;

41. *Takes note*, in particular, of the collaboration between practitioners, experts and other relevant stakeholders on the elaboration of a set of universal standards for non-coercive interviewing methods and procedural safeguards aimed at operationalizing the presumption of innocence, improving effective policing and ensuring that no person is subjected to torture, ill-treatment or coercion during questioning;

42. *Calls upon* all States to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of his tasks, to supply all necessary information requested by him, to fully and expeditiously respond to and follow up on his urgent appeals, to give serious consideration to responding favourably to requests by him to visit their countries and to enter into a constructive dialogue with him on requested visits to their countries as well as with respect to the follow-up to his recommendations;

43. *Stresses* the need for the continued regular exchange of views among the Committee, the Subcommittee, the Special Rapporteur and other relevant United Nations mechanisms and bodies, as well as for the pursuit of cooperation with relevant United Nations programmes, notably the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, with regional organizations and mechanisms, as appropriate, and with civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, with a view to enhancing further their effectiveness and cooperation on issues relating to the prevention and eradication of torture by, inter alia, improving coordination;

44. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure, within the overall budgetary framework of the United Nations, the provision of adequate staff and facilities for the bodies and mechanisms involved in preventing and combating torture and assisting victims of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including, in particular, the Committee, the Subcommittee and the Special Rapporteur, commensurate with the strong support expressed by Member States for preventing and combating torture and assisting victims of torture, in order to enable them to discharge their mandates in a comprehensive, sustained and effective manner, and taking fully into account the specific nature of their mandates;

45. *Recognizes* the global need for international assistance to victims of torture, stresses the importance of the work of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, appeals to all States and organizations to contribute annually to the Fund, preferably with a substantial increase in the level of contributions, and welcomes the establishment of and encourages contributions to the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to support the implementation of the recommendations made by the Subcommittee and of educational programmes by the national preventive mechanisms;

46. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to transmit to all States the appeals of the General Assembly for contributions to the Funds, to include the Funds, on an annual basis, among the programmes for which funds are pledged at the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, and to submit to the Human Rights Council, and to the General Assembly at its seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions, a report on the operations of the Funds;

47. *Welcomes and acknowledges* the work of the Convention against Torture Initiative, launched in March 2014 on the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, to achieve the universal ratification and improved implementation of the Convention by 2024, as well as related regional initiatives on the prevention and eradication of torture;

48. *Calls upon* all States, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other United Nations bodies and agencies, as well as relevant intergovernmental and civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, to commemorate, on 26 June, the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture;

49. *Decides* to consider at its seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions the reports of the Secretary-General, including the report on the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture and the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol, the report of the Committee, the report of the Subcommittee and the interim report of the Special Rapporteur;

50. *Also decides* to give its full consideration to the subject matter at its seventy-fourth session.

73rd plenary meeting
19 December 2017

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General Assembly

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Agenda item 72 (b)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2017

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/439/Add.2)*]

72/164. Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives,

Reaffirming also that, while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and that democracy does not belong to any country or region, and reaffirming further the necessity of due respect for sovereignty and the right to self-determination,

Stressing that democracy, development and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing,

Reaffirming that Member States are responsible for organizing, conducting and ensuring transparent, free and fair electoral processes and that Member States, in the exercise of their sovereignty, may request that international organizations provide advisory services or assistance for strengthening and developing their electoral institutions and processes, including sending preliminary missions for that purpose,

Recognizing the importance of fair, periodic and genuine elections, including in new democracies and countries undergoing democratization, in order to empower citizens to express their will and to promote successful transition to long-term sustainable democracies,

Recognizing also that Member States are responsible for ensuring transparent, free and fair elections, free of intimidation, coercion and tampering with vote counts, and that all such acts are sanctioned accordingly,

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Emphasizing that Member States are responsible for respecting the will of the voters as expressed through genuine, periodic, free and fair elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage, and in this respect expressing serious concern about the unconstitutional or unlawful disruption of representative governance and democratic institutions and the unlawful removal of any democratically elected officials, whether by States or non-State actors,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the subject, in particular resolution 70/168 of 17 December 2015,

Recalling also all relevant Human Rights Council resolutions on the topic, including resolutions 19/11 of 22 March 2012,[1] 31/14 of 23 March 2016,[2] 31/37 of 24 March 2016,[2] 33/22 of 30 September 2016[3] and 34/41 of 24 March 2017,[4]

Reaffirming that United Nations electoral assistance and support for the promotion of democratization are provided only at the specific request of the Member State concerned,

Noting with satisfaction that an increasing number of Member States are using elections as a peaceful means of discerning the will of the people, which builds confidence in representational governance and contributes to greater national peace and stability, and which may contribute to regional peace and stability,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on 10 December 1948,[5] in particular the principle that the will of the people, as expressed through periodic and genuine elections, shall be the basis of government authority, as well as the right freely to choose representatives through periodic and genuine elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures,

Reaffirming the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[6] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[7] the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination[8] and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[9] and reaffirming also that no distinctions are permitted among citizens on any grounds, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, or on the basis of disability, in the enjoyment of the right to participate, directly or through freely chosen representatives, and to vote and to be elected in genuine periodic elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors,

Reaffirming also that the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels should be universal and conducted without conditions attached and that the international community should support the strengthening and promotion of democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the entire world,[10]

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[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53* and corrigendum (A/67/53 and A/67/53/Corr.1), chap. III, sect. A.

[2] Ibid., *Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/71/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

[3] Ibid., *Supplement No. 53A* and corrigendum (A/71/53/Add.1 and A/71/53/Add.1/Corr.1), chap. II.

[4] Ibid., *Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/72/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

[5] Resolution 217 A (III).

[6] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[7] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[8] Ibid., vol. 660, No. 9464.

[9] Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.

[10] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III, para. 8.

Underscoring the important role that regional and subregional organizations play, in accordance with the Charter, in the areas of peace and security, development and human rights,[1] and recalling their commitments to supporting the principles of free and fair elections,

Reaffirming that the full and effective participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality and social inclusion, sustainable development, peace and democracy,

Stressing the importance, generally and in the context of promoting free and fair elections, of respect for the freedoms of peaceful assembly and association and expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and noting in particular the fundamental importance of access to information and media freedom, including through accessible and easy-to-understand formats for new information and communications technologies,

Noting that some countries are beginning to use online technology for balloting purposes, and reaffirming the right to privacy, according to which no one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, and the right to the protection of the law against such interference, as set out in article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online,

Recognizing the need for strengthening democratic processes, electoral institutions and national capacity-building in requesting countries, including the capacity to administer fair elections, promote voter education, the development of electoral expertise and technology and the participation of women on equal terms with men, take all appropriate measures to ensure the effective and full participation of all persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, increase citizen participation and provide civic education, including to youth, in requesting countries in order to consolidate and regularize the achievements of previous elections and support subsequent elections,

Noting the importance of ensuring orderly, open, fair and transparent democratic processes that protect the rights to peaceful assembly, association and freedom of expression and opinion,

Noting also that the international community can contribute to the creation of conditions which could foster stability and security throughout the pre-election, election and post-election periods in transitional and post-conflict situations,

Reiterating that transparency is a fundamental basis for free and fair elections, which contribute to the accountability of Governments to their citizens, which, in turn, is an underpinning of democratic societies,

Acknowledging, in this regard, the importance of international observation of elections for the promotion of free and fair elections and its contribution to enhancing the integrity of election processes in requesting countries, to promoting public confidence and electoral participation and to mitigating the potential for election-related disturbances,

Acknowledging also that extending invitations regarding international electoral assistance and/or observation is the sovereign right of Member States, and welcoming the decisions of those States that have requested such assistance and/or observation,

[1] Resolution 69/277, para. 2.

Recalling its resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005, entitled "2005 World Summit Outcome", in which it welcomed the establishment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Democracy Fund,

Welcoming the support provided by Member States to the electoral assistance activities of the United Nations, inter alia, through the provision of electoral experts, including electoral commission staff, and observers, as well as through contributions to the United Nations trust fund for electoral assistance, the democratic governance thematic trust fund of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Democracy Fund,

Recognizing that electoral assistance, particularly through appropriate, sustainable, accessible and cost-effective electoral technology, can facilitate full access for persons with disabilities and supports the electoral processes of developing countries,

Recognizing also the coordination challenges posed by the multiplicity of actors involved in electoral assistance both within and outside the United Nations,

Welcoming the contributions made by international and regional organizations and also by non-governmental organizations to enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization,

Recognizing the importance of the links that exist between development, peace, human rights, the rule of law, democracy and good governance, including the holding of free and fair elections, and in this regard welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[12]

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization;[13]

2. *Commends* the electoral assistance provided upon request to Member States by the United Nations, and requests that such assistance continue on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the evolving needs and legislation of requesting countries to develop, improve and refine their electoral institutions and processes, including by ensuring full access to all stages of the elections process for persons with disabilities, recognizing that the responsibility for organizing free and fair elections lies with Governments;

3. *Reaffirms* that the electoral assistance provided by the United Nations should continue to be carried out in an objective, impartial, neutral and independent manner;

4. *Requests* the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, in his role as United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters, to continue to regularly inform Member States about the requests received and the nature of any assistance provided;

5. *Requests* that the United Nations continue its efforts to ensure, before undertaking to provide electoral assistance to a requesting State, that there is adequate time to organize and carry out an effective mission providing such assistance, including the provision of long-term technical cooperation, that conditions exist to allow a free and fair election and that the results of the mission will be reported comprehensively and consistently;

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[12] Resolution 70/1.

[13] A/72/260.

6. *Notes* the importance of adequate resources for the administration of efficient and transparent elections at the national and local levels, and recommends that Member States provide adequate resources for those elections, including by considering the possibility of establishing internal funding, where feasible;

7. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all States to take all appropriate measures to ensure that every citizen has the effective right and opportunity to participate in elections on an equal basis;

8. *Strongly condemns* any manipulation of election processes, coercion and tampering with vote counts, particularly when done by States, and calls upon all Member States to respect the rule of law, the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons and the will of voters as expressed through genuine, periodic, free and fair elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage, as well as by secret ballot, thereby fostering conditions in which all citizens, regardless of how they voted, whom they supported or whether their candidates prevailed, have the motivation and incentive, as well as the right and opportunity, to continue to participate directly or through elected representatives in the conduct of public affairs and their Government;

9. *Calls upon* all States to ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and to be elected;

10. *Also calls upon* all States to enhance the political participation of women, accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women and, in all situations, promote and protect the human rights of women with respect to voting in elections and public referendums and being eligible for election to publicly elected bodies on equal terms with men;

11. *Recommends* that, throughout the timespan of the entire electoral cycle, including before and after elections, as appropriate, on the basis of a needs assessment and in accordance with the evolving needs of requesting Member States, bearing in mind sustainability and cost-effectiveness, the United Nations continue to provide technical advice and other assistance to requesting States and electoral institutions in order to help to strengthen their democratic processes, also bearing in mind that the relevant office may provide additional assistance in the form of mediation and good offices, upon the request of Member States;

12. *Notes with appreciation* the additional efforts being made to enhance cooperation with other international, governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate more comprehensive and needs-specific responses to requests for electoral assistance, encourages those organizations to share knowledge and experience in order to promote best practices in the assistance they provide and in their reporting on electoral processes, and expresses its appreciation to those Member States, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations that have provided observers or technical experts in support of United Nations electoral assistance efforts;

13. *Acknowledges* the aim of harmonizing the methods and standards of the many intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in observing elections, and in this regard expresses appreciation for the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, which elaborate guidelines for international electoral observation;

14. *Recalls* the establishment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations trust fund for electoral assistance, and, bearing in mind that the fund is currently close to depletion, calls upon Member States to consider contributing to the fund;

15. *Encourages* the Secretary-General, through the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters and with the support of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, to continue to respond to the evolving nature of requests for assistance and the growing need for specific types of medium-term expert assistance aimed at supporting and strengthening the existing capacity of the requesting Government, in particular by enhancing the capacity of national electoral institutions;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Electoral Assistance Division with adequate human and financial resources to allow it to carry out its mandate, including to enhance the accessibility and diversity of the roster of electoral experts and the electoral institutional memory of the Organization, and to continue to ensure that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is able to respond, within its mandate and in close coordination with the Division, to the numerous and increasingly complex and comprehensive requests from Member States for advisory services;

17. *Reiterates* the need for ongoing comprehensive coordination, under the auspices of the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters, between the Electoral Assistance Division, the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support of the Secretariat and the Office of the High Commissioner to ensure coordination and coherence and avoid duplication of United Nations electoral assistance;

18. *Requests* the United Nations Development Programme to continue its democratic governance assistance programmes in cooperation with other relevant organizations, in particular those that promote the strengthening of democratic institutions and linkages between civil society and Governments;

19. *Reiterates* the role of civil society and the importance of its active engagement in the promotion of democratization, and invites Member States to facilitate the full participation of civil society in electoral processes;

20. *Also reiterates* the importance of reinforced coordination within and outside the United Nations system, and reaffirms the clear leadership role within the United Nations system of the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters, including in ensuring system-wide coherence and consistency and in strengthening the institutional memory and the development, dissemination and issuance of United Nations electoral assistance policies;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, in particular on the status of requests from Member States for electoral assistance, and on his efforts to enhance support by the Organization for the democratization process in Member States.

73rd plenary meeting
19 December 2017